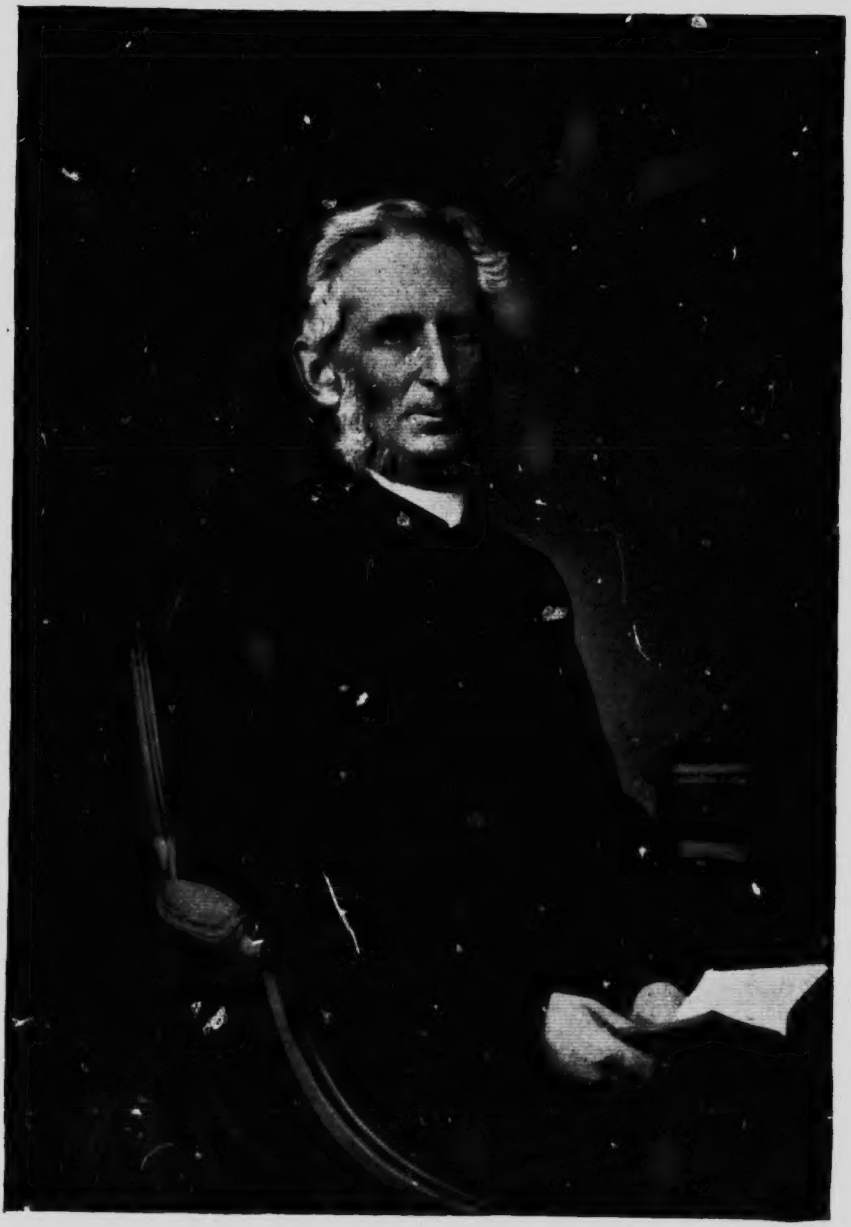


THOMAS VALPY FRENCH,

First Bishop of Lahore, 1877 87.

[Frontispiece

AN HEROIC BISHOP

THE LIFE-STORY OF FRENCH OF LAHORE

BY

EUGENE STOCK

HODDER AND STOUGHTON
LONDON NEW YORK TORONTO

BV
3277
F7S75
1913

Printed in 1913

140736

MAR 1 1993

PREFACE

AMONG the many distinguished men who have been sent forth by the Church of England as Bishops into the mission-field, very few can be compared, for ripe scholarship, [illegible]-heartedness and breadth of view, [illegible]crifice of self, and length of service [illegible] Thomas Valpy French. Yet, for some unaccountable reason, few of the leading names are less well known. Writers and orators ring the changes of their eulogies on Heber and Cotton, Gray and Mackenzie, Selwyn and Patteson, Steere and Hannington—great men, all of them,—and entirely ignore French, worthy as he really is of a place among the foremost. The admirable biography of him by the Rev. H. A. Birks, in two substantial volumes, is long only because his career was so lengthened and of such varied interest, and because his letters, or rather the relatively small selection of them printed, are so delightful; and it is now out of print.

In the following pages an attempt is made to tell the story of French's life in briefer form, in the hope that in this way the name and the work of one of the noblest of modern missionaries may become more familiar to the Christian public, and that one more brilliant example of self-sacrificing devotion may be added to the many that have stirred the heart of the Church.

When French was appointed to the new Bishopric of Lahore, Dr. Westcott, then Professor of Divinity at Cambridge, wrote of the "joy and confident hope" such an appointment inspired; and when, after a ten years' episcopate, he was resigning his office in order to resume the life of a pioneer missionary, Archbishop Benson wrote to him, "Your very presence [at Lahore] has lifted, and daily lifts, the mission cause into its true position for the first time." Such testimonies justify the present attempt to make Thomas Valpy French better known as one of the Church's heroes.

E. S.

N.B.—Any profits accruing to the author will be devoted to missionary work at Agra or Lahore.

CONTENTS

CHAPTER I

PAGE

THE MAN 1

CHAPTER II

HIS FIRST PIONEER WORK: THE AGRA COLLEGE 6

CHAPTER III

HIS SECOND PIONEER WORK: THE FRONTIER MISSION 21

CHAPTER IV

AT HOME 27

CHAPTER V

HIS THIRD PIONEER WORK: THE DIVINITY COLLEGE 30

CHAPTER VI

PAGE

His Fourth Pioneer Work: The Lahore Bishopric 46

CHAPTER VII

His Position as a Churchman . . 69

CHAPTER VIII

Journeys and Visits, East and West . 83

CHAPTER IX

Among the Eastern Churches . . 95

CHAPTER X

His Fifth Pioneer Work: Arabia . . 105

CHAPTER XI

The Home Call—and After . . . 118

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

THOMAS VALPY FRENCH . . *Frontispiece*

PREACHING IN AN INDIAN VILLAGE . . . . OPP. 10

A STREET SCENE IN LAHORE 84

TUTORS AND STUDENTS AT THE LAHORE DIVINITY SCHOOL 88

BISHOP FRENCH 48

THE CEMETERY AT MUSCAT, WITH BISHOP FRENCH'S GRAVE 120

CHAPTER I

THE MAN

OXFORD has given the Church a noble band of Missionary Bishops. Recalling only a few of the more conspicuous, we think of Heber and Daniel Wilson, among the earlier in India; of Williams and Hadfield, each with his half-century of labour in New Zealand; of the two missionary martyrs, Patteson and Hannington; of the first English Bishops in South Africa (Gray), Madagascar (Kestell-Cornish), China (G. Smith), Japan (Poole), Rupert's Land (Anderson); of still surviving veterans like Copleston of Calcutta, Scott of North China, Tucker of Uganda; to say nothing of many other distinguished Bishops in colonial fields. But in the front rank of all must be placed the name of French, first Bishop of Lahore.

Thomas Valpy French was born on New Year's Day, 1825, at the Abbey, Burton-on-

Trent, in which town his father was vicar of Holy Trinity Church for forty-seven years. The Rev. Peter French was much respected as a leading and successful Evangelical clergyman. He was an able preacher, and he accomplished an important work in building churches and mission-rooms and schools in the town and district. Mrs. French was noted for the "sweetness and gentleness" of her character, and indeed was described as an embodiment of the Psalm of Love in the thirteenth chapter of 1st Corinthians. Thomas was their eldest child. The quaint, old-fashioned house in which he was born, once part of a Benedictine Abbey, on the banks of the Trent, and only separated from the bustling brewing town by its own wall, was typical of the future Bishop's own life, passed amid incessant and pressing occupations, yet marked by a certain aloofness and ecclesiastical quietism which made him breathe the atmosphere of the venerated past, even in the environment of the urgent present.

It is recorded of the future missionary that, from early childhood, he manifested

" his keen interest in the various deputations who came to plead the cause of Missions," and " his carefulness to mention their names in his prayers " ; and also that, at the age of six or seven, he seriously began to write sermons. After a short time at Reading Grammar School, he went at the age of fourteen to Rugby, then in the full tide of its influence under Arnold. A school-fellow of his there, afterwards a well-known London clergyman, the Rev. G. P. Pownall, has left an interesting account of French as a Rugby boy. They two, and R. A. Cross (now Viscount Cross) used to study together. Pownall describes him as having been " wise unto that which is good, and simple concerning evil," and as having been somewhat puzzled by Arnold's sermons, which, despite their manly earnestness, did not seem quite " the gospel " he was familiar with at Burton.

In 1843 he went to Oxford, having won a scholarship at University College. He took no part in the burning controversies of the time; and the influence of John Henry Newman, who was then nearing his seces-

sion, was on the wane. He taught in the Holywell Sunday School, under E. M. Goulburn (afterwards Dean of Norwich). He was a collector for the C.M.S., and he formed (it is believed) a little missionary union, one of whose members was A. H. Mackonachie, afterwards of St. Alban's, Holborn. But he was a thorough student, and in 1846 he obtained a first class in "greats," along with Conington, Bright, and Ince—all of whom became Professors—and subsequently won the coveted Chancellor's Latin Essay Prize, and was elected Fellow of his college.

The call to the mission-field came to French from different quarters and in different forms. First, H. W. Fox, the pioneer of the Telugu Mission in South India, during his first visit to England addressed a breakfast-party of men in Trinity College; and Canon Curteis (author of one of the Lives of Bishop Selwyn), who was French's contemporary at University College, and was taken by him to that breakfast, writes that he "can hardly doubt that that address made a permanent mark" on his "sympathising

and enthusiastic soul." T' n Fox, on his return to India, wrote to French and begged him to come out. "If God's promises be true," he wrote, "the more men come out the more men will He raise up to bless the Church with, which out of its poverty gives its best to His cause." Then came a great speech by Bishop Samuel Wilberforce, appealing to Oxford men to go forth; which French himself looked back to in later years as having brought him to the point. He and a friend prayed together over it, and that friend, Arthur Lea, was killed in a railway accident soon after. "The one was taken," says Mr. Birks, French's biographer, "and the other left, and so their mutual vows of consecration appeared to him doubly binding." He at once put himself in communication with the Church Missionary Society, and he was thankfully accepted for missionary service on April 16, 1850.

Then began a career remarkable as comprising five distinct periods of foreign service, every one of them occupied by distinctly new and in a sense pioneer work.

CHAPTER II

HIS FIRST PIONEER WORK: ST. JOHN'S COLLEGE, AGRA

FRENCH was appointed to educational work at Agra. That historic city was the capital of the great territory then called the "North-west Provinces," now the "United Provinces," comprising a great part of the Valley of the Ganges. In North India, the whole of which was in those days comprised in the Presidency of Bengal, Agra was only second in importance to Calcutta. And it was already a city to which attached deep missionary interest. In 1811 a Baptist minister was sent there from Carey's Mission at Serampore, but was instantly sent back by the British authorities, under a guard of heathen Sepoys; and on being invited again to Agra, merely to be tutor to an officer's children, he was a second time ordered back by Lord Hastings,

then Governor-General, who said that "one might fire a pistol into a powder-magazine, and it might not explode, but no wise man would hazard the experiment."

But in the following year Daniel Corrie, one of the famous Five Chaplains under the East India Company to whom India owes so much,* was appointed to Agra; and he took thither with him a remarkable convert from Mohammedanism, led to Christ by the preaching of Henry Martyn at Cawnpore. This man, Sheikh Salih, had been master of the jewels at the Court of Oudh; and he was baptized at Calcutta on Whit Sunday, 1811, by the name of Abdul Masih (Servant of Christ). A Corresponding Committee of the C.M.S. had been formed at Calcutta and the Society had remitted to it money for the employment of native Christian readers; and the first of these to be engaged was Abdul Masih. He was thus the first C.M.S. missionary in India; for no English Churchman had yet gone out definitely for work

* The five were David Brown, Claudius Buchanan, Henry Martyn, Thomas Thomason, and Daniel Corrie. They were first called "The Five" by Sir John Kaye in his *Christianity in India*.

among the non-Christian population; and although there were a very few German Lutherans in the south working under the S.P.C.K., no missionary was allowed by the East India Company in the north, *i.e.* in British territory. Carey's Mission was in a Danish possession. Abdul Masih worked zealously at Agra for several years, and brought some fifty converts to Corrie for baptism. He was ordained by Bishop Heber in 1826, but died in the following year. His portrait was sent home to Charles Simeon, and it hangs in the C.M.S. committee-room to this day. It is worth remembering that the first Indian clergyman of the Church of England was (*a*) a convert from Mohammedanism, (*b*) a fruit of Henry Martyn's preaching, (*c*) admitted to the sacred ministry by Bishop Heber.

Schools were opened and "readers" stationed at several cities in North India, notably at Agra, Delhi, and Cawnpore, being generally superintended by the Company's chaplains or by earnest Christian officers; but Agra was not definitely occupied as a mission station until 1838–40,

when three Germans appeared in India, who had laboured in North-western Persia under the Basle Missionary Society, but had been expelled by the Russians when the latter annexed the districts in which they were working. These men, Hoernle, Pfander, and Schneider, were engaged by the C.M.S., and stationed at Agra; and they afterwards received Anglican orders from the Bishop of Calcutta.

Meanwhile the great work of Dr. Alexander Duff at Calcutta was opening the eyes of missionary leaders to the value of Higher Education on Christian principles, as an evangelistic agency among the upper classes of India. One C.M.S. missionary in the south, Robert Noble, adopted Duff's method and opened a High School at Masulipatam, which in after-years produced a long succession of individual high-caste converts, many of whom became the leaders of the Church in the Telugu districts. The Society was being urged by friends in the north, particularly by Mr. James Thomason, the very able Lieut.-Governor of the North-west Provinces, and his secretary, Mr. (afterwards

Sir William) Muir, to open a similar college at Agra; and they raised a large fund on the spot wherewith to start it. But the Society had no men suitable for the purpose. Pfander was a missionary of the highest class, but he was devoting himself to a different kind of work among the Mohammedans, and English University men were needed for the projected college. French's offer came providentially in the nick of time; another offer from a Dublin graduate of distinction, Edward Craig Stuart, enabled the Committee to respond joyfully, at last, to the appeal for men; and the Special Fund raised in connexion with the Society's Jubilee in 1849 helped the Fund raised in India to provide the means.

It is an interesting fact that the Valedictory Meeting at which French and Stuart were taken leave of, on Aug. 20, 1850, in the parish schoolroom of Islington, was attended by, among others, Dr. Ludwig Krapf, the great pioneer of East Africa Missions, who was in England at the time after thirteen years of toil and suffering in the Dark Continent. So, just ten years

before, in 1840, the young David Livingstone had been present at the famous meeting for the promotion of the Niger Expedition, over which Prince Albert presided, only four months after his marriage with Queen Victoria.

French and Stuart sailed on September 11 in the East Indian *Queen*, which reached Calcutta after an unusually quick voyage, of course round the Cape, on January 2, 1851. They at once proceeded up-country to Agra, where they were warmly welcomed by the Lieut.-Governor and his colleagues, several of whom were devout Christians. Of James Thomason himself, the highest encomiums are on record. Sir Richard Temple, in his *Men and Events of my Time in India*, writes, "He was one of the most successful Englishmen that have ever borne sway in India"; "his life was a pattern of how a Christian Governor ought to live." Under him were trained some of the ablest of Anglo-Indian civilians: among them John Lawrence, Robert Montgomery, Donald McLeod, and William Muir. He was a son of Thomas Thomason, one of the Five Chaplains before

alluded to, who had been recommended to the East India Company by Simeon of Cambridge. Simeon's faith in getting Indian appointments for Cambridge men of his type, when the need was so great of godly men at home, has indeed been abundantly rewarded

French soon lost his colleague, Stuart being transferred to Calcutta; and, on the other hand, he gained a still closer companion, being married to Miss M. A. Janson, a lady he had met at Oxford. Naturally he was largely occupied at first in studying the languages he would need if he were to be an efficient Principal of the College. In later days he became known in India as "the seven-tongued man"; and his ideas of what was necessary may be gathered from counsel given by him subsequently to a young missionary:

"You must, of course, commence with Urdu or Hindustani, so as to be able-to talk with your servants, to help in the services of the church, and in the schools. You had better give some six or eight hours a day to that, and also spend two or three hours at

Punjabi, to be able to talk with villagers. You should also try to give two or three hours to the study of Persian, which you will find invaluable in the schools, and all your spare time to Arabic, so as to be able to read the Quran."

The new college, named St. John's after Henry Martyn's college at Cambridge, " with additional reference to St. John as the Apostle of Oriental Churches," was opened in 1853. But a sort of beginning was to be seen before that. Mr. Charles Raikes, the Chief Judge at Agra, thus describes what he saw :

" In a corner of the rising edifice, with some twenty or thirty black boys round him, sat the future Bishop of Lahore. The weather was hot, the room small, the subject a lesson in *Paradise Lost*. The contrast between the highly educated Fellow of University College and his little dusky flock, between the sounding phrases of the poet and the Hindustani patois of the students, was too great for me. Surely, I exclaimed, as I went out, this is a case of labour lost, of talent misapplied, of power wasted. I

was wrong: that tie between teacher and disciple, which in the day of adversity proved so strong and so lasting, was already formed, and was daily to draw closer the bond of love."

From the first the college was successful in attracting boys, although there was a large Government College in the city. In that institution the Bible was not taught; and intelligent parents of a superior class, though they had no wish for their sons to become Christians—and indeed no fear of their doing so,—did wish them to learn truthfulness and honesty, and the moral virtues generally; and experience has shown that it is always Christian teaching that does this, even where there is no conversion. But French, of course, aimed at conversions, and constantly prayed for them; and he soon discerned tokens of the Spirit's working among his pupils. His boys, he told the congregation when preaching in the English .urch, knew Scripture better than the average Oxford undergraduate; and some of them, he said, though un-

baptized, had "endured more for Jesus" than any of the English in Agra. But he longed to be training "the native apostles, or at least the Tituses and Timothys of India," and hoped that they might come out of his first class of ten boys One of the ten, baptized a few years later by Shackell (a subsequent Principal), became the Rev. Madho Ram, pastor at Jabalpur. It is the general experience of these high schools and colleges that, while few conversions occur among the pupils at the time, many occur in after-years, when the truths learned at school come back with fresh force under other influences. French himself, twenty years later, far away in the Punjab, baptized an old student of St. John's, who found him out there, and came forward to confess Christ. Another case was revealed in a letter received by him in 1873. The writer had desired baptism while in the college, but was induced by his mother not to come forward; and now, after twenty years, he had at last been enabled to give himself wholly to Christ and had been baptized. "One soweth and another reapeth."

But French did not confine his labours to the college. He eagerly used every opportunity to make Christ known by conversations with individuals whom he met in various ways, and by itinerating in the neighbouring villages; and several conversions were the result. In one year three Mohammedan munshis were baptized, of whom he wrote, "They have forsaken all for Christ, and have suffered bitter reproaches for His Name's sake." There was at that time much earnest controversy between the missionaries and the Moslem moulvies. Pfander was untiring in this work, and his books, the *Mizan-al-Haqq* (Balance of Truth), *Miftah-al-Asrar* (Key of Secrets), and *Hall-al-Ishkal* (Solution of Difficulties), had a great effect upon the Mohammedan mind. The public discussion of 1854 is one of the famous incidents in the history of Missions in India. The scene was a striking one. The meeting took place in the C.M.S. school, which was crowded with Mohammedans sitting cross-legged on the floor. On one side sat the Moslem champions, and behind them a band of

PREACHING IN AN INDIAN VILLAGE.

assistant students; opposite were Pfander and French and their brethren. Piles of English and German works, among which Strauss was conspicuous, lay in front of the Moslem disputants; and the burden of their attack proved to be the various readings in the MSS. of the Scriptures. The points adduced are familiar enough to even elementary Bible students in Europe; but the moulvies had got hints of damaging criticisms of the Bible, and had spared no pains to search them out. Hints from whom? It was afterwards discovered that they had been suggested by the Roman Catholic Bishop and priests! The discussion lasted two days, and, as might be expected, both sides claimed the victory. But not many years afterwards two of the younger moulvies, who at that discussion heard for the first time the Christian argument put verbally faithful servants of Christ, came out and embraced the Gospel. One was Moulvie Safdar Ali, who became Extra Assistant Inspector in the Government Education Department; the other was Moulvie Imad-ud-din, whom we shall meet

again as the Christian preacher and writer of Amritsar on whom Archbishop Benson conferred the Lambeth D.D. degree.

In 1857 came the great Mutiny, which for a time threatened the overthrow of British rule in India, and in which hundreds of English men and women and children were massacred. For nearly six months Agra was blockaded by the insurgent Sepoys. Writing of the early days of the conflict, Mr. Charles Raikes says:

"I must record the impression made on me by the calmness and coolness of Mr. French. Every Englishman was handling his sword or his revolver; the city folk running as if for their lives; . . . outside the college, all alarm, hurry, and confusion. Within calmly sat the good missionary, and hundreds of young natives at his feet, hanging on the lips that taught them the simple truths of the Bible."

"And so it was," he goes on, "throughout the revolt." While highly paid native officials deserted to the enemy, the students in French's college, Hindu or Mohammedan though they might be, stayed where they

were; and when the city had to be abandoned, and all retired to the fort, they still proved trusty friends. An incident occurred when that grave step was taken which has often been misreported. The actual fact was that, when the Lieut.-Governor who had succeeded Thomason, Mr. Covlin, withdrew all Europeans into the fort, the native Christians in the city were admitted too; but then appeared the Christians from Secundra, six miles away, entreating to be taken in. French could not induce the officer at the gate to admit them; but at length, "on declaring his unalterable purpose to stay out with them if they were refused," the officer consented to open the gate if a written order were brought from the general; and this was easily obtained. And well it proved that they were admitted, for the heathen and Mohammedan servants had all deserted, and these poor Christians were taken into employment instead.*

* The mistaken report was that native Christians *already in the fort* were to be *turned out*, and that French only saved them by threatening to go out with them.

In 1859, French's health being much impaired, he took furlough to England. For a year and a half he served as Curate at Clifton Parish Church. Then, despite many remonstrances against his returning to India, he sallied forth again, leaving wife and children behind. "I trust," he wrote to his wife, "the sacrifice we thus make of some of life's happiest years, the years when joy is intensest, may be graciously accepted for His sake, who alone can put any worth into our poor maimed offerings." It was not, however, to Agra that he was now bound. St. John's College had been committed to other hands, and the development was commencing which has since made it one of the largest missionary institutions in India. But French was to be again the pioneer in a new enterprise.

CHAPTER III

HIS SECOND PIONEER WORK: THE FRONTIER MISSION

ON the north-west frontier of India, between the River Indus and the Afghan mountain-ranges, lies a territory three hundred miles long by fifty broad, which is known as the Derajat or "Encampments." It is nearly conterminous with what is now called the North-west Frontier Province, this province having been separated from the Punjab a few years ago. Into it debouch all the mountain passes between the Khyber to the north and the Bolan to the south. By these passes there continually come over into the plains of India the trading caravans of the Afghan mountain tribes, bringing goods of all kinds from Central Asia. One city beyond the Indus, Peshawar, had already been occupied by the C.M.S., under the

auspices of Sir Herbert Edwardes, the brilliant soldier and the hero of Ruskin's *A Knight's Faith*, who was Commissioner at the time. But the Derajat had never yet heard the Gospel.

And now, in 1861, came the summons to the Derajat. From whom? From the Commissioner of the district himself, Colonel Reynell Taylor. Just as Henry and John Lawrence had welcomed missionaries to the Punjab, as Herbert Edwardes had encouraged them to come to Peshawar, as Robert Montgomery had invited them to Lucknow, so now the ruler of the Derajat called upon them to enter his district. Reynell Taylor wrote to Edwardes, who was then in England; and Sir Robert Montgomery, who was now Lieut.-Governor of the Punjab, also wrote, warmly supporting the appeal. The latter said: "We have held the frontier for twelve years against all comers, and now, thank God, we are at peace with all the tribes. Now is the time to hold out the hand of friendship and to offer, through the missionaries, the bread of life. . . . I rejoice to see Missions spread-

ing." If the British Empire had always been extended and administered in this spirit, what an untold blessing it would have been to the world!

These two letters Edwardes brought to the C.M.S. Committee on the very day when, there being a deficit in the finances, many applications for grants were being refused. But both Taylor and Montgomery offered large contributions towards the cost of the projected Mission; and the Society could not refuse to undertake it. But where were the men? Two young recruits were at once set apart for the enterprise; but it was indeed a fresh token of the guiding of God's providence when French agreed to lead the party. At their leave-taking with the Committee he referred to a motto on one of the tombs in Exeter Cathedral—"This man put his hand to the plough, and never looked back."

The Derajat proved as might be expected, a difficult and trying field of missionary labour. It was a wild country inhabited by a wild people, all Mohammedans of a specially bigoted type. French sought to

avoid the few Englishmen, officers and civilians, at the two or three chief towns, most of whom, unlike their chief, were far from welcoming a missionary, and to live among the natives; and, to conciliate Afghan prejudice, he, against his own taste, grew a beard, as he found that "they measured a man as much by his beard as by his brains." Sir R. Montgomery wrote to him and Robert Bruce (afterwards the distinguished missionary in Persia, who joined him): "It is uphill work at first, but you have all Central Asia before you, if your voices can reach the people there. Be very discreet in all you do . . . and may God bless your labours." But they were not allowed by the local authorities to travel about without a guard, and "a man with a sword" was, against French's protest, told off to watch over him. "I suppose," wrote French, "that, if danger arose, he would take to his heels and leave me to fight my own battle." He found the people, so far from being ready to hear the Gospel, doubting whether the English ever prayed or had any religion. This is always a

puzzle to Mohammedans. Even at Peshawar, where there was a regular church, they said, "Why ask us to give up our creed? We are more religious than the English. They only worship God once a week, and then they do not kneel down to worship Him!" But French was surprised at the ability shown by the mullahs when it came to real discussion, though shocked at their "fiendish malice" in reading passages from the New Testament, and "mocking and blas[illegible]ing." This, however, only fanned his He gave his whole heart to the work, and diligently set himself to acquire Pushtu, the Afghan language.

But this was not to be. Just at Christmas (1862) he was found by a military doctor insensible in the jungle from congestion of the brain, and was "snatched," he was told, "from the jaws of death," with no hope for him but in leaving by the first steamer for England. "With severe remedies," he wrote, "my reason returned (I suppose the sun and fatigue had injured it). Afterwards I had a bad attack of dysentery, but rallied from this, though I

am at the *ne plus ultra* of debility and depression." He reached England on Feb. 7, 1863.

But what of the Derajat Mission? Bruce and others carried on the work zealously, and there were a few notable converts. But the Mission was long quite undermanned. In later years Medical Missions have been established at different points, and have gained great influence over the people, particularly the wild tribesmen of the Afghan hills. One hospital, at a place called Tank, worked by an Indian doctor, was the only building spared when murderous raiders attacked the town and put many of the townspeople to the sword. Quite recently the splendid work of Dr. Pennell at Bannu has become widely known through his book, *Wild Tribes of the Afghan Frontier*, for which Lord Roberts wrote a preface. Pennell's hospital has been pronounced by a British officer to be worth two regiments to the Government; and his death by blood-poisoning has been universally and deeply mourned.

CHAPTER IV

AT HOME

BETWEEN the first four of French's periods of foreign service he had three sojourns in England. In 1859–61, as we have seen, he was Curate at Clifton. After his breakdown in the Derajat, he was six years at home. For a time he served as Curate at Beddington, Surrey, of which parish the venerable Dr. Marsh was Rector; where one of his fellow-workers was George Maxwell Gordon, afterwards so well known as the Pilgrim Missionary of the Punjab, who owed some at least of the inspiration that sent him abroad to his colleague's devotion to the missionary cause. This was one of the happiest episodes of French's life. The companionship of the aged Rector, of his saintly daughter, Miss Catherine Marsh, and of other members of their family circle, was a privilege of the highest kind

In 1864 French became Incumbent of St. Paul's, Cheltenham, and for four years he ministered to a large population with untiring assiduity. He was always ready, besides, to go as a "deputation" for the C.M.S. to different parts of England, so far as his parochial duties allowed; and this work much refreshed him, though he sometimes complained sadly that the company at meals before or after the missionary meeting would talk about any subject rather than Missions—a fact familiar to all who have engaged in deputation work, though less noticeable now than it was before knowledge of the field was so widely diffused. But, although the C.M.S. claimed the best energies he could spare from his parish, he could not limit his sympathies even to the Society he loved. Unlike most of the Cheltenham clergy, but like one of them, Mr. Fenn, he gave also his support to the S.P.G.

But, whatever might be French's official duties, a student he would always be; and in the one year 1868 his diaries are stated by his biographer to have contained extracts from books he was reading, which are thus

mentioned without any definite order: Homer, Chrysostom, Charles of Bala, Gerlach, Charnock, Hugh Macmillan, *Life of Lacordaire*, McCheyne, Pusey, Carlyle, Milman, A. Monod, Hengstenberg, Carter of Clewer, Spenser's *Faerie Queen*, Livy, Propertius, Burke, Bunsen, Niebuhr, Bengel, Berridge, Fletcher of Madeley.

All this while, however, he was conscious that India was stealing to him. Dr. Kay, one of his closest friends, who had been Principal of Bishop's College at Calcutta, assured him that, after his last experience, he *ought not* to go out again; but words from Robert Clark, the leading C.M.S. missionary in the Punjab, were more to his mind: "If those who ought to go won't, then those who *ought not must!*" And the year 1869 saw French once more on the way to India.

It may as well be added here that when he again returned to England after his next period abroad, he was for three years Rector of St. Ebbe's, Oxford, a parish which had been served by F. W. Robertson, Bishop Baring, Bishop Waldegrave, and Dean Barlow.

CHAPTER V

HIS THIRD PIONEER WORK: THE DIVINITY COLLEGE

IN 1867 French submitted to the Church Missionary Society a paper entitled "Proposed Plan for a Training College of Native Evangelists, Pastors, and Teachers for North-west India and the Punjab." Both civilians and soldiers in India, he said, and also Indians of learning and intelligence, considered that "the materials in hand for constructing and building up the Native Church in India were not turned to the best account," and that the more advanced converts should receive a higher theological training to fit them to be able pastors and evangelists. The history of Christendom, he argued, showed that in former times institutions were located at convenient centres where "a small body of Christian teachers devoted themselves to the more complete

establishment and firmer building up, in the truth and doctrine of Christianity, of a portion of the choicest and ablest converts." This was not left to be a desultory work, occupying the spare moments of missionaries already fully occupied. The ripest veterans undertook the work. An important feature of French's scheme was that the teaching should be given in the vernacular. "The plan of instructing our native teachers in English without putting them in possession of the power to express themselves on Christian doctrine correctly in the vernacular is quite abhorrent to the general practice of the Church of Christ from the beginning, as well as to right reason itself."

After a good deal of correspondence this scheme came before the C.M.S. Committee on Feb. 18, 1868. It so happen that on the same day were considered proposals by Sir R. Montgomery (who was now at home) for the better training of the Society's students at Islington ; and when, after two hours' discussion, these received approval, French's similar suggestions for Indian students came

on. Distinguished Anglo-Indians, Montgomery himself, J. F. Thomas, F. N. Maltby, H. Carre Tucker, and leading clergymen like Dr. J. C. Miller, all spoke in his favour; the plan was adopted with enthusiasm, and French was given carte blanche to carry it out.

And then a fresh token of God's favour appeared in the offer of the Rev. J. W. Knott, who was present that day, to join in the enterprise. Knott was one of the most remarkable men who ever dedicated himself to missionary service. He was a Fellow of Brasenose, and had been an ardent disciple of Dr. Pusey, who sent him to the charge of St. Saviour's, Leeds, the church built by Pusey at his own cost, though under the name only of "A Penitent." Dr. Hook's great work had made Leeds an Anglican stronghold; but, High Churchman as he was, he disliked both the ritual and the teaching at St. Saviour's. To Pusey himself the church proved a sore trouble. Within six years of its consecration nine out of fifteen clergymen connected with it seceded and

joined the Church of Rome. Knott was sent by Pusey to retrieve the position, and he was soon the recognised "confessor" of hundreds of men and women from all parts of the North of England. But the issue in his case was very different. After a prolonged and painful mental struggle, he avowed to Pusey that his experience of the confessional had entirely changed his views, but in the opposite direction; and eventually he resigned his charge, and returned to Oxford. Presently, in virtue of his Brasenose fellowship, he succeeded to the important and lucrative rectory of East Ham. It was this influential position that he now surrendered in order to join French.

Much correspondence with India as to the place where the college should be located caused delay; but on January 5, 1869, the C.M.S. committee-room was crowded for the leave-taking of French and Knott. The speakers on the occasion were Professor Birks of Cambridge, French's old friend Dr. Kay, Dr. Alexander Duff, the veteran founder of Educational Missions in India,

and Colonel Lake, a distinguished soldier and administrator from the Punjab, who afterwards became an honorary secretary of the Society. Dr. Kay pleaded earnestly that in accordance with Thomason's old motto, *διὰ τὸ ὄνομά μου κεκοπίακας καὶ οὐ κέκμηκας*, French might be able to "labour and not faint," *and not overwork*. French, in his reply, referred to a Roman soldier mentioned by Livy, who, after twenty campaigns, was going forth to war again, and who said, "I have eight children, and might claim exemption, but I shall always be ready to go against my country's foes when my Imperator calls me." It was remarked, says French's biographer, that one of the two missionaries was leaving behind eight children, and the other a living of £800 a year.

It had been settled that the new divinity college should be located at Lahore, the capital of the Punjab. That city was not an Anglican mission-station, but the American Presbyterians, who had occupied it before the first English missionaries entered the Punjab, spontaneously asked the C.M.S.

A STREET SCENE IN LAHORE.

Photo by C. Pilkington.

to send a native pastor for Indians of the Church of England who chanced to be there; and now, with the same generosity, they welcomed the selection of Lahore for the projected institution, as being the most easily accessible centre for students from a distance. It was not French's wish to begin on a grand scale. It was quite in accordance with his ideas that, on the night he arrived at Lahore, there was no one to receive him, so he took his baggage himself in a hand-barrow to the dâk bungalow, and found a sofa to pass the night on —"beginning," as he said, his new life "in an inn, according to the best precedent that could be followed."

French's plans did not meet with the approval of all the missionaries. Some doubted the wisdom of his scheme. Certainly it was a remarkable one. It was to give a really high-class theological training. The Hebrew Old Testament, the Greek Septuagint, the Greek New Testament, the Greek and Latin Fathers, were to be studied; and although English, with its wealth of Christian literature, was not to be excluded,

the instrument of instruction was to be the vernacular Urdu. That is to say, the students were to read, say, Ezekiel in Hebrew and Ephesians in Greek, and Mr. French and his helpers were to lecture on these books in Urdu, with occasional use of Persian, Pushtu, Punjabi, Sanscrit, and Arabic; while Chrysostom and Augustine, Dörner and Tholuck, Hooker and Owen, were to be laid under contribution. "A Mohammedan convert, brought up all his life in distaste of and prejudice against English, should find that his want of English does not disqualify him for perfecting his curriculum of theology. Christianity should be domesticated on the Indian soil."

After many delays, during which French was constantly occupied, not only in preparation for the future by linguistic studies and translational work, but also in frequent evangelistic tours in the country, the college was opened on November 21, 1870. There were only native buildings, ill adapted to the purpose even after alterations; and some years elapsed before the present premises, including the chapel, appeared.

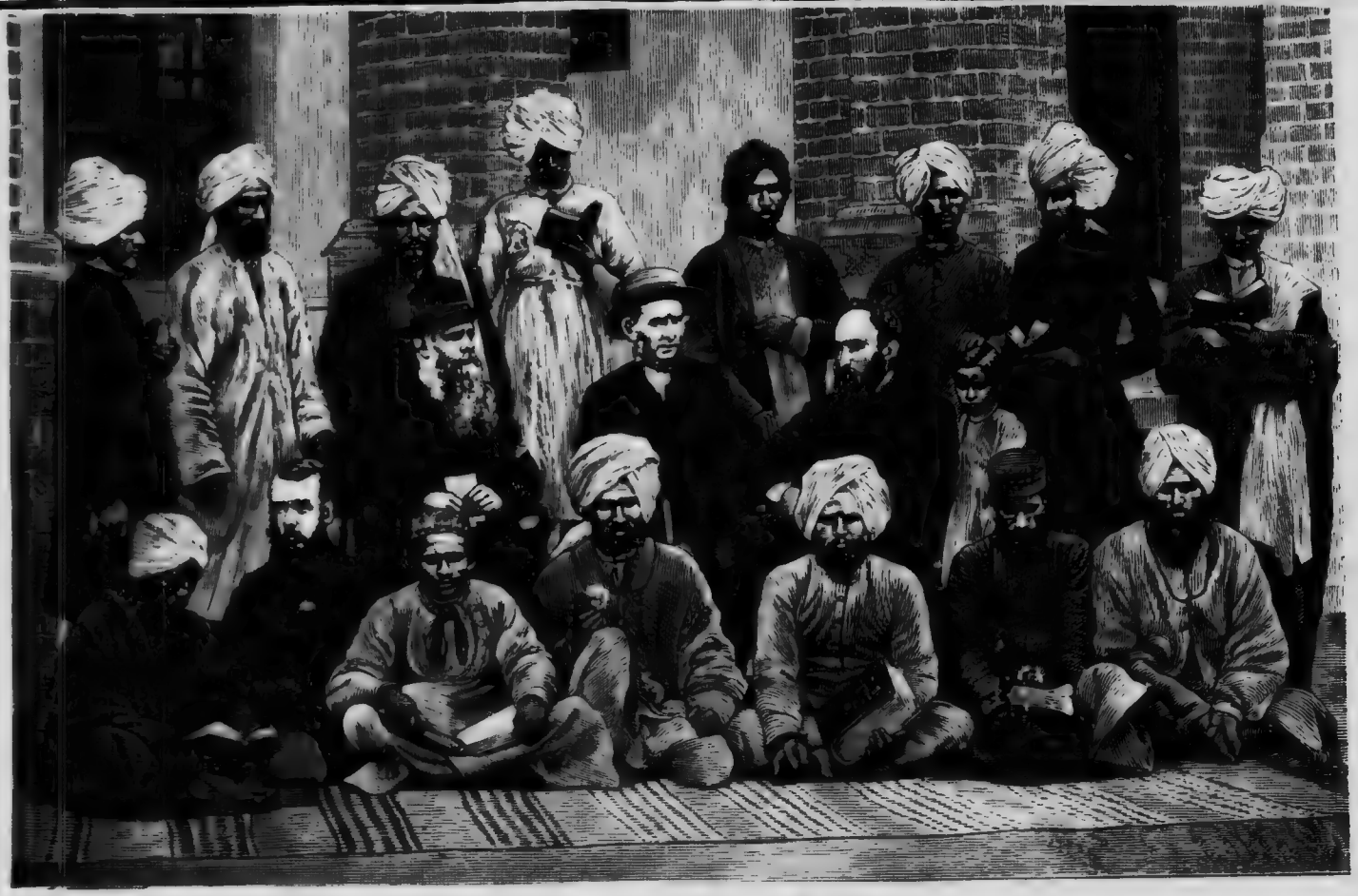
There were only four students, but seven others soon joined, and with these French felt he had a good beginning. All through the weary negotiations about the site and the alterations—for which kind of work French was by nature unfitted, and which therefore was a heavy burden upon him—he had rested on the assurance that every obstacle or disappointment was specially ordained of God to throw His servants more entirely on Him.

But where was Knott? Alas! he was already dead. He had used the waiting time in earnest work at Peshawar, not only helping in the Mission there, but ministering to the British troops. Unhappily, as human judgment would say, he stayed on too long in that fever-stricken valley, and worked too persistently, and on June 28, 1870, he died suddenly after a few hours' illness. The greatest grief was manifested by the whole English community; and the funeral was a very striking scene:

"The body was conveyed to the cemetery

on a gun-carriage lent by the officer commanding the Royal Artillery, and was carried to the grave by eight soldiers, members of a Bible-class he had conducted. Nearly every officer of the station was present, including the General and the Deputy Commissioner and 500 men of the 5th and 38th regiments."

French had learned to love and admire Knott greatly, and he regarded the removal of such a man as "a strange and almost unparalleled mystery"; but, he added, "It is comforting to rest assured that God is His own interpreter." Other brethren came to his assistance. He was helped at different times by Robert Clark, Rowland Bateman, T. R. Wade, and his old colleague at Beddington, George Maxwell Gordon. Deep interest was taken in England in his proceedings. The money for purchasing the site, and for scholarships to maintain the students, was provided by generous friends in his congregations at Clifton, Beddington, Cheltenham, etc., as well as in India. Rugby and Repton sent offertories. The Rev. H. Houghton gave £1,000



G. M. Gordon. R. Clark. T. V. French. T. R. Wade.

TUTORS AND STUDENTS AT THE LAHORE DIVINITY SCHOOL.

to endow a native professorship on condition that the Septuagint was included in the college course. Dr. John Wordsworth (afterwards Bishop of Salisbury) sent contributions from Oxford men, and Dr. Westcott similar ones from Cambridge. Dr. Lightfoot (afterwards Bishop of Durham), at the S.P.G. annual meeting, referred to "the noble letters which Mr. French had sent to the C.M.S."; and Westcott characteristically wrote: "The West has much to learn from the East, and the lesson will not be taught till we hear the truth as it is apprehended by Eastern minds."

The students came from all parts of North India. There were Afghans from the mountains and Hindus from the plains, Rajputs, Punjabis, Kashmiris, Persians. Most had been Mohammedans, some Hindus or Sikhs. Some were baptized Christians from infancy being children of converts; some were the fruit of mission schools; some had found Christ in later life. Although the majority were Anglicans, others were not excluded. All were welcome; but on one condition—they must wear

Indian dress. Once a catechist from Delhi, who was in European garb, applied for admission, and French let him in for a week, hoping he would conform, but on his refusal he was sent away.

On the same principle French gave the students Bingham's *Christian Antiquities* to study, that they might "know the habits and customs of worship and discipline in the early Church, which were often so much more Oriental and more free from stiffness than our English liturgical services, borrowed so largely from Rome." He was a great admirer of patristic theology, and would translate Chrysostom or Augustine, or Hilary on the Trinity, direct from the Greek or Latin into Hindustani. But he did not neglect more modern writers. With a view to lectures on the Being of God, the Person of Christ, the Work of the Holy Spirit, etc., he studied afresh Hooker and Owen and Butler, Dörner and Martensen and Liddon. This meant hard work:

"I do not think many can have an idea of the labour these classes cost. After all

the time that I have spent on languages and theological books, I find that to lecture usefully an hour of preparation for each lecture is scant measure; often many hours are required even for one. . . . With the Mohammedans dogging our steps and scenting out keenly and industriously every real and imaginary difficulty, we cannot do as we would, and confine ourselves wholly to the spiritual interpretation. The critical will have its place. . . . Then, to put it all into intelligible and expressive Hindustani involves further torture of brain and culling of technical words from Arabic and Persian text-books, the Sufi literature, the Vedant and other philosophical systems of the Hindus."

But all was subordinate to the study of the Bible itself:

"Between our Greek and Hebrew lectures, prayer-meetings, expositions, and sermons, we manage to distribute various parts of the Old and New Testaments. . . . It is delightful to witness . . . the beaming countenances which attest their joy. They thoroughly realise the text, 'I am as glad of Thy Word as one that findeth great spoil.'"

Severe as the Lahore curriculum was—too severe, some thought, though French insisted that the students took with especial kindness to Hebrew—the men were not there only for book-study. Evangelistic work in the city and district was carried on, and there were baptisms year by year in the tank in the college grounds. Besides this, French led his men in the vacations to distant parts. A new district on the Jhelum was taken up, as a special field for them; but this plan did not last. It was projected by G. M. Gordon, but the students had neither the physical nor the spiritual strength to do what he did. Gordon, in fact, became almost a fakir. He lived in a tower, the corner bastion of an old fort. He found he could generally walk ten miles a day—not a common thing in India—and thus be independent of a horse or "tum tum" (gig). "It would spoil the verse, 'How beautiful upon the mountains,' etc.," he said, "if *feet* were exchanged for *hoofs!*" And the district he traversed in this way from his old tower was "as if a London clergyman had Lincoln, York, and New-

castle under his charge, to be visited periodically without railways or coaches." This kind of life did not suit native students.

French had the joy of seeing several of his men in definite posts of missionary service before he left India again. Two were ordained by Bishop Milman of Calcutta on Dec. 15, 1872. These were (1) Imam Shah, who had been a most bigoted Mohammedan, but had been struck by the term "Our Father" applied to God—so strange a phrase in Moslem ears—and then had been led to Christ by the Rev. Daud Singh (a Sikh baptized at the S.P.G. Mission at Cawnpore), and who has been now for forty years pastor of the native congregation at Peshawar; (2) John Williams, a Christian-born native of the North-west Provinces, who had gone to the Afghan frontier as a Government doctor, having an official medical qualification, but who joined the C.M.S. Mission on a lower stipend, and for many years laboured at Tank, conducting the hospital before mentioned as spared by the Afghan raiders.

But four of the students died early; one

drowned in the Jhelum ; one of consumption, who confessed to the Rev. Tara Chand (S.P.G. Delhi) that his real heart-conversion had taken place at the college ; a third also of consumption ; and a fourth struck down by fever while itinerating, who went on preaching in his delirium.

At length French himself could no longer struggle against repeated illnesses. After one of them he wrote, "To-day I have wound up my watch again for the first time for about seven weeks, and knelt down for the first time, as I have been too weak to do this. My heart has often knelt, I trust, but not my knees." One cannot wonder that he should be ill, when we find Mr. Ridley (afterwards so well known as the devoted Bishop of Caledonia), who was at that time a C.M.S. missionary in the Punjab and itinerated with French, writing of him that he was impossible to manage as a patient !—and, on the other hand, helpless as a nurse when others were ill.

So, in May 1874, he found himself once more with wife and family in England. He was succeeded in the Principalship of

the college by another Oxford man, Dr. W. Hooper. But Hooper was a Sanscrit scholar, and more interested in the Hindus than in the Mohammedans; and after a few years he moved to Allahabad to start a similar institution for the N.W. Provinces. A third Oxonian, F. A. P. Shirreff, followed at Lahore, and gave twenty years of service to the college; and a fourth, H. G. Grey, succeeded him. Eventually the Oxford succession was broken by the appointment of E. F. E. Wigram, who is a Cambridge man. French's plans have naturally been modified as the years have gone by; but the college still maintains its career of many-sided usefulness.

CHAPTER VI

HIS FOURTH PIONEER WORK: THE BISHOPRIC OF LAHORE

THE immense diocese of Calcutta, which at first had comprised all India, and Ceylon, and Australia, had not been divided since the formation, in 1835–7, of the dioceses of Madras (including Ceylon) and Bombay and Australia (Sydney). It is needless here to notice the various difficulties, legal and other, which long prevented any further action. But at last, in 1877, plans were successfully matured for two new bishoprics, for Burma and the Punjab respectively. The Bishopric of Lahore was endowed by a fund of £20,000 raised in memory of Bishop Milman of Calcutta, who had died while visiting the frontier stations in the previous year. Two former Viceroys, Lords Lawrence and Northbrook, and

distinguished Anglo-Indians like Sir Bartle Frere, attended the inaugural meeting at Lambeth Palace; and Lord Salisbury, who was then Secretary of State for India, contributed £1,000. The S.P.C.K. gave £5,000, the S.P.G. £2,000, the Colonial Bishoprics Fund £3,000; £4,000 was raised in India. Lord Salisbury asked Archbishop Tait to propose a man for the new bishopric, and Tait wrote to French, who was then working at Oxford as Rector of St. Ebbe's, saying that he wished to suggest his name. After consulting three or four friends, French agreed, on condition that any responsibilities to the Government of India would not involve a prohibition of distinctly missionary work; and this proviso did not prevent the formal offer coming to him in the name of the Queen.

The selection was received with universal approval. Dr. Westcott wrote of the "joy and confident hope" of all at Cambridge. "We seem," he said, "to see the great thoughts of the [Divinity] School become the inspiring thoughts of a diocese, and so, if God will, the solid foundation of a true

native Church." The consecration took place at Westminster Abbey on St. Thomas's Day (1877) together with that of Dr. Titcomb for the other new Indian bishopric of Rangoon. The sermon was preached by French's old friend, Dr. Kay, who, in consenting to do so, remarked how greatly the missionaries would rejoice to have as their Bishop one who could "know the heart" (Exod. xxiii. 9) of a missionary. His text was Acts xxviii. 30, 31, the last two verses of that book; and the closing words, "no man forbidding him," came with special appropriateness in view of the condition which French had attached to his acceptance of the bishopric. Within a month he was on his way to India, starting on Jan. 16, 1878.

The new diocese comprised the Punjab and the adjacent Native States (such as Kashmir), and the Province of Sindh. No part of this territory had been British when the Acts of Parliament of 1813 and 1833 constituted the dioceses of Calcutta, Madras, and Bombay; and therefore the jurisdiction which had been exercised by the Bishop of

BISHOP FRENCH

Calcutta over the clergy in the Punjab, and by the Bishop of Bombay over those in Sindh, was purely ecclesiastical and not defined by Parliament; so there were few legal difficulties in forming the new diocese. But an important, though small, fragment of Calcutta Diocese was also included. This was the Delhi district, the historic city of Delhi having been transferred from the North-west (now the United) Provinces to the Punjab after the Mutiny in recognition of the fact that it was the Punjab Army that had besieged and captured it, which was really the decisive victory that restored British rule.

The inclusion of Delhi in the new diocese gave Bishop French jurisdiction over a Mission in which, though his own connexion had been with the C.M.S., he was personally interested, it having been started, in fact, at his suggestion. This was the Cambridge Mission, formed under the auspices of Lightfoot and Westcott, both of them Divinity Professors, and of which Edward Bickersteth, son of the future Bishop of Exeter, and grandson of

a former C.M.S. Secretary, was the first Head. The S.P.G. being already established at Delhi, the new Mission, while maintaining its independence, was affiliated to the venerable Society.

But all the rest of the Anglican Missions in the diocese belonged to the C.M.S., which had been invited to the Punjab twenty-five years before by its early British rulers, Henry and John Lawrence, and their colleagues. It had indeed been preceded by the American Presbyterian Mission, which had settled at Lahore immediately on the annexation in 1849; but its work was more widely extended than that of the Americans, the important cities of Amritsar and Multan and Peshawar, and Kashmir, and the Derajat (French's previous field), and Karachi and Hyderabad in Sindh, being occupied—without reckoning several rural stations; and it has been largely extended since then. The British troops also were numerous, and the English civilian community not small; so a sufficiently arduous work lay before the new Bishop.

French received a warm welcome from all in the Punjab; not least from those whom he alludes to as "the dear Presbyterian brethren, Newton and Forman" —the men who had, five-and-twenty years before, joined in the invitation to the C.M.S. to the newly conquered province. Some of the chaplains were afraid of what a C.M.S. missionary might turn out to be; but they soon found that they had a Bishop of singularly independent mind and very broad sympathies, and who, while definitely Evangelical on fundamental doctrines, was really with them, and not with the majority of his old C.M.S. brethren, upon many matters external and ecclesiastical. He appointed as Archdeacon a leading chaplain, the Rev. H. J. Matthew —who was destined in after-years to succeed him in the see; and he desired to appoint Mr. Robert Clark, the senior C.M.S. missionary, as an Archdeacon specifically for the Missions and the native Church; but this, on some technical ground, the Government refused to allow.

Bishop French was not great in or-

ganisation. It was not his fault, however, that the "diocesan synods" which he three times assembled were without definite powers, and were only like the "diocesan conferences" in England. The "established" position of the Church in India prevented the "synods" from being effective governing bodies like those in the non-established Churches. But at least they afforded opportunities for chaplains and missionaries, and missionaries of different societies, to meet for prayer and friendly conference; opportunities, too, for French to deliver valuable addresses on Church principles and work, and to exercise his remarkable personal influence. A lay member wrote to him after the second gathering: "Your Synod was to me a baptism of love, tenderness, spirituality, and power, as it was, I believe, to every one present." His successor, Bishop Matthew, wrote in after-years that French "had not the gift of working through others"; but his own individual labours were untiring.

Of these labours much might be said. He travelled to every civil or military or

missionary station in the diocese, preaching both in English and in the vernaculars, confirming, visiting clergy and laity. "His humility and gentleness and self-denial and love," wrote an editor generally disposed to criticise him, "have been sermons to all who beheld him, just as his words have been to all who heard him." He was only really disliked by the worldly English people who resented his faithful preaching. He himself said that they would "listen with indifferency" to the exposition of evangelical doctrines, "and sleep it out," —"justification, etc., what care they about such things?" "But they do resent being preached to about conversion, and being told that all are not Israel who are of Israel, and that the friendship of the world is enmity with God." And he felt it to be his plain duty, as a bishop, to "reprove, rebuke, exhort," though "with all long-suffering." In one of his letters home he wrote; "I preached a solemn sermon yesterday at the pro-cathedral on the duty of Society and the Church with reference to adulterers in our midst. Mrs. —— called

it an Athanasian kind of sermon." Another time he mentions having to "soothe" a chaplain and congregation who were indignant at his having written in the church record book, "The day was not satisfactory, I fear, viewed in the light of eternity," referring to the few communicants and small collection. But how did he try to "soothe them"? "I tell them the censure was chiefly on myself for preaching so ineffectually; but they can't take this in!" He was never at home in what is called "worldly society," except when he found opportunities for testimony. At one dinner-party he defended Christianity against a man who praised Buddhism as "the noblest, truest, holiest religion in the world"; on which occasion an Indian of high rank expressed surprise at the conversation, as "he thought English gentlemen never talked of anything but polo."'

In fact, French's greatest happiness was to get away from state and social "functions," and to go preaching in the frontier mountain valleys or in the villages of the plains; and this he did whenever his

episcopal duties allowed. Not that his only evangelistic work was among natives. He highly valued his many opportunities of addressing British soldiers; and he took the total abstinence pledge, despite his "often infirmities," as an example and encouragement to them. The Afghan War of 1879–81 gave him an opening for work of this kind which he eagerly seized. He went up to Quetta, and to Kandahar, in company with George Maxwell Gordon, who was himself killed at Kandahar while attending to wounded soldiers; and his journals give interesting accounts of his efforts to influence officers and privates alike. His biographer confesses that "he might sometimes weary the patience of the soldier in that hot Indian climate by the length of his discourse, or shoot above the heads of all but the more thoughtful of his hearers." "But every soldier could appreciate his manifest sincerity, and when he went miles out of his way in the burning sun to minister to two or three in their sickness, or stripped off his coat in hospital to rub the limbs of some poor fellow writhing

with pains of cholera, they recognised that in their own chief pastor they had one who understood their troubles, one who was ever ready to endure all hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ." And an aide-de-camp at Lahore testified to his influence with "fine young fellows, plucky, honourable, and straight," who found that "his big and chivalrous heart made them feel better men," and ready to "do their round of parade or stables or whatever came to their hand with a keener sense of duty."

Although French continued Bishop of Lahore only ten years, he was successful in building the cathedral, despite all sorts of difficulties. The scholar and saint was no dreamer. He might not easily set others to work, but what he could do himself he did indeed with his might. "I would rather," he wrote to his daughter, "have a church built to remember me by than have my marble face looked at in Westminster Abbey." The church services at Lahore had for thirty years been held in a building which had been the tomb of a

dancing-girl who became a Begum. Sir R. Montgomery, when Lieut.-Governor, had secured a site for a church, and some money had been collected, but the project had hung fire; and now Bishop French resolved that the new diocese should have a cathedral built "worthily of God." "In the midst of an architectural people," he wrote, "and most self-sacrificing in what they spend on buildings for sacred purposes, it is a scandal that we should worship in a tomb belonging to a Mohammedan past." The story of his efforts, both in India and in England, to raise the money is pathetic indeed. "I have written," he wrote, "my hands almost into paralysis begging and pleading; but the paralysis of results exceeds that of hands." For three years he gave half his episcopal income to the fund, cutting down all possible expense in order to do this.

At length, in the tenth and last year of his episcopate, the building was, not indeed completed, but in a state allowing of its being consecrated and put to regular use; and the consecration took place on

the Feast of the Conversion of St. Paul, January 25, 1887. The Lieut.-Governor ordered the closing for the day of the law-courts and government offices, so that there might be a general holiday. The Bishop arranged that one aisle should be reserved for the British soldiers and the other for the native Christians. At the English service he himself preached; but this was followed by an Urdu service, at which Dr. Imad-ud-din was the preacher, and the lessons were read by Mr. (afterwards Rev.) H. E. Perkins, Commissioner of Amritsar, and the Rev. Mian Sadiq Masih. French strongly insisted on the right of the native Christians to a part in the cathedral; and he would not allow any symbol or ornament in it that could "offend the Moslem's horror of images, or foster superstition in any recent convert from a base idolatry." An illustration of his ruling even small details by scriptural precedent occurs in one of his letters:

"There was a wish on the part of some to have a sort of monster lunch in the

Montgomery Hall, but I have stood out for hospitalities of a more private kind at the houses of civilians and other well-to-do people. At a huge lunch it often happens that 'one is hungry and another is drunken,' and there is much more expenditure of wine, bad waiting, and bad cooking. The model I have proposed is Nehem. viii. 8–18."

In his sermon French pleaded earnestly that "no invidious exclusiveness of race" might begrudge poor native Christians their rightful share in the cathedral. "The sons of the stranger that join themselves to the Lord," he quoted from Isa. lvi., "even them will I bring to My holy mountain and make them joyful in My house of prayer." And with a characteristic prophetic fervour he anticipated a day when "the long-severed East and West" should meet in common worship:

"Even such a thing might happen as St. Chrysostom tells happened in a Greek church at Constantinople. He was about to preach himself, but a Gothic priest came

in with a number of his people, and he, the Greek archbishop, gave up his pulpit for that day. And so before the polished Greeks was heard the rough and (then) uncultured tongue of our northern forefathers, and they learnt the lesson that in Christ there is neither Greek nor Jew, Briton nor Hindu, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free, but Christ all and in all."

With these lofty aspirations filling his mind, we can understand how the Bishop always remained a missionary, not in heart only, but in actual life. Take, as one illustration, what he wrote about Quetta in 1882 :

"The Supreme Government of India has obtained permission to occupy Quetta permanently as a standing military outpost of strategic importance, stretching out its hands to the turbulent tribes, and beckoning and commanding peace to them. Oh that in it may be the sweet message of peace, and with it the Hands that made Joseph's hands strong ! It was a great privilege to spend three afternoons in witnessing to

Afghans in the fruit-market at Quetta in their own tongue, and leaving a few copies of the Word of God among them. I translated and copied out Isa. liii., and gave it to one of the best-educated among them to take home with him, and never part with, as written out with the Bishop's own hand. May God graciously bless the feeble effort."

It was French's especial joy to ordain Indian clergymen, and he was privileged to admit eleven to the ministry of the Church during his ten years' episcopate. One of these may be mentioned more particularly. He was a learned Sikh pundit, "steeped in Sanskrit, Vedic, and other philosophic lore," and "a man of family and influence and authority with Government." In 1881 French wrote, "He has completely come round, as I do trust, to the simple truth at it is in Jesus, and is very anxious to study Hebrew at the College." "I stayed," continued the Bishop in his simplicity, "a few hours with him at his own village, and partook of his milk and chapaties." Kharak Singh—that was his name—in his

turn was at a "tea-dinner" with the Bishop, and the latter wrote:

"The poor old pundit didn't know how to use his knife at all with a leg of fowl, so I took up mine with my fingers, and begged him not to mind doing it, as I didn't. I had to ask Mrs. Wade's pardon. I hope she won't make a picture of the Bishop at the head of his table eating with his fingers. . . . The pundit entered into a very difficult discussion about stones and gems, which Mrs. W. thought rather above her, being in Sanskrit, or nearly so."

This good man was ordained in 1887. One convert of the C.M.S. Mission whom French did not ordain was enticed away from the Church for a while by the Salvation Army, brought to England by them in 1886, and exhibited in London on an elephant as one of the fruits of their work. But he was rescued by Dr. Weitbrecht, who happened to be in England at the time, and was ordained by French's successor in the see; and he occupies to-day a leading position in the diocese.

With the most conspicuous of the Indian clergymen, Imad-ud-din,* the Bishop had a close friendship, and it was a special pleasure to him when he received the authority of Archbishop Benson to invest the learned moulvie with the Lambeth degree of D.D. He performed the simple ceremony in the mission church at Amritsar, and in the course of his address said :

"I wish to make it clear that it is not merely as a mark of honour and distinction that this title is bestowed upon our brother by the head of the Church of England, in the behalf of that Church, and as its chief representative pastor, but as a symbol of brotherly love, sympathy, and fatherly blessing, and as a bond and pledge of fellowship and friendship between the two Churches of England and India ; or, rather to signify that if the British and Hindu are two in race, in the Church they are one, linked and knit in an inseparable, indivisible

* This Imad-ud-din was the Mohammedan moulvie who had assisted in the Agra discussion noticed on page 17. He had afterwards been converted to Christianity through reading St. Matthew's Gospel.

bond of love, friendship, and fellowship; not that one branch should be in bondage to the other, but that they should, by the grace of God, be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment."

French's opinions on the problems of future Church organisation in the mission-field were based both on principles gathered from the whole history of the Church and on his practical experience of actual existing work. He deprecated a "native Church" separate from the English Church in India. One Church for India was his ideal. But he was not so strict as many are on questions of discipline: for instance, he was disposed, like some other of the Indian Bishops, to relax somewhat the rule that no polygamist could be baptized. As regards the Thirty-nine Articles he wrote:

"There is very much in our Articles so happily and wisely expressed that I should be sorry to see them rejected as a whole,

though I should not object to see them revised and modified where passing and short-lived phases of English church parties gave a tinge of insular specialities to the formularies employed."

In one branch of missionary service Bishop French took an important part. This was the translation and revision of the Scriptures, etc., in which so accomplished a scholar and linguist would naturally take a deep interest. In the summer of 1881 he spent several weeks at Murree, in the hills, with Dr. Hooper, Mr. Shirreff, Tara Chand, and Imad-ud-din, devoting six hours a day to the revision of the Hindustani Prayer-book, on which the S.P.C.K. expended £2,000. The result, indeed, was not wholly satisfactory. The Bishop overruled his colleagues unduly, and used his great learning to introduce many Arabic and other terms which, however scholarly, were not intelligible to the simple native Christians; and the book, though valuable for reference, has not proved suitable for general use. On the

other hand, his revision, with two frontier missionaries of the C.M.S., of the Old Testament and St. Luke in Pushtu (the Afghan language) was a success.

The whole missionary work of the Church of Christ commanded French's enthusiastic sympathy. So far as the Church of England was concerned, he warmly welcomed Archbishop Benson's scheme for a Board of Missions, by which an official recognition by the Church would be given to all the work done in its name, without superseding or interfering with the Societies that were actually doing it. He was no mere theoriser. He wanted the Gospel sent to all nations, and it was with him a secondary thing what particular organisation sent it. He especially watched with keen interest the evangelisation of East and Central Africa by the C.M.S. and the U.M.C.A.; and he sought to instruct the Anglo-Indians of the Punjab by giving lectures in several places on the story of the Uganda Mission down to the death of Bishop Hannington.

Among other interests of Bishop French was the Punjab University. Not only was

he, naturally, a member of the Senate; he gave lectures also, and acted as examiner. But this and other occupations of his time and strength must be passed over.

As the tenth year of his episcopate ran its course, French, more and more conscious that his health was not equal to the burdens of the diocese, was in correspondence with Archbishop Benson, and with his old Rugby school-mate, Lord Cross, who was then Secretary of State for India, about his retirement. Dr. Benson received the intimation with deep regret. He wrote to French: "Your very presence in your place has lifted, and daily lifts, the mission cause into its true position for the first time." But he yielded to French's earnest request for his support in pressing on the Government the appointment of Archdeacon Matthew to the bishopric; and, when this was settled, French sent in his formal resignation, as from December 22, 1887, ten years and two days since his consecration.

But it was not retirement from the foreign service of the Church. On the contrary, French's desire was to devote himself more

entirely than ever to mission work, without the inevitable pomp and circumstance of episcopal life. How for the fifth time he became a pioneer in a new sphere, a future chapter will tell.

CHAPTER VII

HIS POSITION AS A CHURCHMAN

VIEWED ecclesiastically, Bishop French was so unique in his position as an Anglican Churchman, and in his attitude to Church parties and controversies, that no account of him would be complete without a careful statement on these matters.

We have seen that he was brought up in an evangelical home of the beautiful old type which so many writers not themselves identified with evangelical views—Mr. G. W. E. Russell notably—have loved to describe; and that his Oxford life, which coincided with the later Newman period, did not move him from his whole-hearted evangelical faith. So much so that, when the missionary call came to him, no question arose as to the organisation he should join. He went to the

C.M.S. as a matter of course, and was joyfully received into the brotherhood of that Society. And all his life he loved the C.M.S., pleaded its cause, defended it from hostile criticism, lived in close fellowship with many of its leading members at home and missionaries abroad. "The dear old C.M.S.," he wrote in 1887, "I plead for with heart and soul, however much I wish sometimes they were able to work more in harmony with Church authorities, and on the lines of the Church history of the first four centuries."

But he certainly did not love the Evangelical Party as such. "It is evangelical truth," he wrote in 1867, "that I stickle for. The party, as a party, I never fight for: its Church views I don't agree with; but its teaching, or rather the grand fundamental life-giving truth, which it was commissioned to bring to the forefront, will never die, I believe, because it is the heart and core of the Gospel." But earlier even than that, during his first period in India, he wrote: "In Church views . . . constitutionally and by experience, as well

as by study of facts, I am a High Churchman." His historic instinct, his imaginative mind, his love of symbolism, his keen appreciation of patristic and mediæval writings, his strong view of episcopal authority, all combined to influence him in that direction.

At the same time, he was in no sense identified with High Churchmen as a party. He took his line quite independently of what any recognised Church party might think. His teaching on the Holy Communion, for instance, was of a *via media* type. He used language which Evangelicals would naturally avoid; but his words, "In the heart of the faithful recipient, not in the hands of the priest who celebrates, the elements are the conveyors of the Lord's body and blood in all their virtues and healing and cleansing gifts," remind us of Keble's original expression in the earlier editions of the *Christian Year*, "In the heart, Not in the hands," which in later editions was altered to, "In the heart, As in the hands." He not only approved but earnestly advocated the placing of a

cross on or over the holy table, and on one occasion replaced with his own hands the cross which some one had taken down; but he wrote strongly against "bowings and genuflexions" borrowed from Rome. He not only defended Evening Communion, but himself practised it, "having," he said, "no sympathy with the Ritualists about Early Communion as alone valid and permissible." He habitually took the eastward position, but consented, where it was objected to, to take "the corner between the north and east." On confession, too, he took a middle line. He condemned "the invasion of the secrecy and privacy of homes" which he thought the Roman use involved, and held that "a ministry whose principle is that the Christian shepherd is beyond all else the father-confessor of his people, though it gratifies the love of power, and fastens silken chains round hearts that are naturally reverential and dependent, feeble, and loving to shake off responsibility, yet does not in the end foster robustness and solidity of Christian character, nor cultivate the

best and purest and strongest types of Christian manhood and womanhood." Yet when the Sisters of St. Denys, whom he had invited to India, desired to make their confessions, he heard them himself, "dreading it beforehand," but preferring this to "handing it over to young chaplains." "I had quite satisfied myself," he wrote, "from Hooker, and words in the Service for the Sick and Holy Communion offices, that, within reasonable limits, it was the duty of the Church of England to recognise it as part of the ministerial function."

It will be readily understood that the High Church chaplains in the diocese, who acknowledged that they received him with prejudice on account of his antecedents, learned to appreciate and respect him. His successor, Bishop Matthew, wrote: "No diocese was ever administered on lines more independent of party than the diocese of Lahore by its first Bishop. He had points of contact with every party, and he endeavoured to secure competent representatives of every school among his clergy."

On the other hand, the C.M.S. men,

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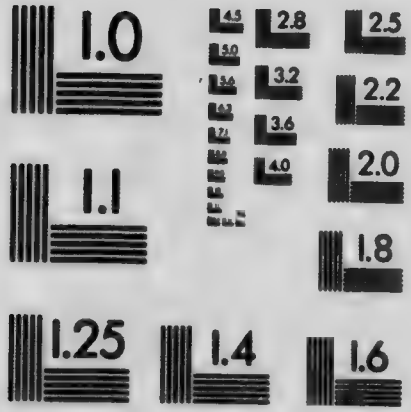

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while they revered his saintly character and his unreserved devotion to the missionary cause, were, as might be expected, a good deal troubled about the line he took. That a man should take the eastward position at Evening Communion seemed to some of them strangely inconsistent—as no doubt it would equally be to the opposite school! That he should bring Sisters with vows into the diocese, and at the same time translate Spurgeon's sermons and write of "the delightful notices" of Moody's services and Haslam's reminiscences in *The Christian*, was a perplexing problem. The senior missionary, Robert Clark, a man of the highest character, who did a noble fifty years' work, and who was his intimate friend, gently remonstrated with him on some of the points above mentioned; but French, with all his humility and distrust of self, was immovable in matters of conscience. To no man would he have more gladly yielded than to Robert Clark; but in 1886 he wrote to him: "If mother [the Church] and daughter [the C.M.S.] disagree, I must be forgiven for taking the mother's

side! But it is sometimes not so much *the daughter* as *the daughter's sons!*—I am afraid—only a very few of them, happily." And again, after he had left India:

"My last sigh and pang of agony will be for the miserably small and frivolous strifes which fritter away our strength on such trifles as eastward and northern position, mixing of the wine with water, the bishop's pastoral staff, etc. If it were questions like Virgin-worship, or bowing down to adore the elements, then we are on ground worthy of our steel; but the sooner we have done with these childish contentions about airy nothings, so much the better for the Truth and the worse for Rome."

On one occasion he took a quite unexpected course. In 1883 the Bishops of the Province of India and Ceylon assembled for conference at Calcutta. There were Bishops Johnson of Calcutta, Mylne of Bombay, and Copleston of Colombo, who were regarded as definitely "High"; Cald-

well of Tinnevelly and Strachan of Rangoon, S.P.G. missionaries of an older type; Gell of Madras, Sargent of Tinnevelly, Speechly of Travancore, distinctly Evangelical; and French. They adopted a series of resolutions on certain Church questions, and issued a "Letter . . . to all of every race and religion" in India. French had to leave Calcutta before the letter was finally drawn up, and, as he had thus no opportunity to move the insertion of some additional clauses, he refused to let his name be appended to it. The letter rested the claims of the Church of England upon its "Apostolical Order." French thought that a threefold base should have been mentioned, viz., "Evangelical Truth, Apostolical Order, and Working Power and Usefulness." It was a notable illustration of his independence of mind that he should withhold his signature from a document which had been adopted by a body of Bishops of such varied theological views.

Strong Churchman as French was, he could hold true fellowship with the Presbyterians and other non-Anglicans in the

diocese. When some of the C.M.S. men mistrusted him, he wrote, "My dear Presbyterian brethren understand me better." Mr. Forman, the veteran American Presbyterian, said, "If Bishops could be like Bishop French, we should all be ready to be Episcopalians." Another venerable member of the same Church, an Indian minister, the Rev. Golak Nath, asked him to preach to his congregation: "I told him I was prevented by strict Church rules from so doing, but on another visit, when less pressed, I should consent to have a prayer-meeting with them, and do it with pleasure. I also promised to preach with him in the bazaar."

But all questions of Church order and ritual, and even of dogmatic theology, were to Bishop French secondary to the one supreme question of personal religion. That, he considered, was the real characteristic of the old Evangelicalism to which he still clung. An extract from an account of him by Bishop Edward Bickersteth of Japan, who had been the founder of the Cambridge Delhi Mission, and had some-

times acted as his chaplain, will show a little of his private religious life.

"Emphatically he was among those who followed the apostolic model in giving themselves to prayer as well as the ministry of the word. 'We will keep that room, please, as an oratory: we shall need the help,' I can remember his saying when we reached a dâk bungalow where we were to spend two or three days. Those of us who, as a rule, prefer written to extempore prayers would probably have made an exception in favour of the Bishop's, largely composed as they were of scriptural phrases linked together with great brevity and skill. At times he carried fasting so far as to weaken his strength for the work which had immediately to be done. He studied with care, and made frequent use of the chief devotional manuals. His love of hymns was intense. Like other saintly souls, he found in them the greatest support, and, though he was not a musician, and found difficulty in keeping the time, would insist on singing them on his journeys.

"No one could be with him long without knowing that he was in the society of one

who lived in familiar intercourse with the great minds alike of the past and present. Like S. Charles Borromeo and John Wesley, he pursued his studies unweariedly on his journeys. . . . In the years that I was his chaplain, the Gallican divines, Dupanloup, Perreyve, Gratry, etc., claimed his attention increasingly. . . . Among the Schoolmen, he set store on the judgment of Aquinas. Dörner was the modern theologian whom he held to have penetrated deepest into the great mysteries of the faith."

But the man is best revealed by his letters; and it would be hard to find in any biography letters more delightful in every way than those which Mr. Birks selected out of a vast number to print in the *Life*. They could hardly, however, be appreciated from such very brief extracts as might be included in these pages; and it will be best not to attempt to illustrate in that way his personal friendships and the intimacies of family life. It will be more germane to the subject of this chapter to copy three or four paragraphs

in which he, according to his custom, briefly indicated to his wife and children the topics of sermons he had preached:

Easter Day, April 13, 1879.—"This morning I dwelt, in Hindustani, before a wonderful congregation of native Christians —some 200, of whom 75 were confirmed yesterday, and over 160 were present at the Lord's Table this morning—on the destruction of Pharaoh's host in the Red Sea as the appropriate type of the open tomb of the Lord Jesus, round about which are strewn the corpses of the forgiven, obliterated, and subdued sins of His people, as set forth in Micah vii., not forgetting Rev. xv."

Easter Day, Rawal Pindi, April 17, 1881.—"It is a sight to see the churches in Peshawar and Rawal Pindi, the number of soldiers and officers. In this place there has been almost every officer at the Holy Communion to-day at the two morning services. I dwelt on Jesus Christ as the Beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things He might have the preeminence. . . . I showed how all our beginnings of good, of resisting evil, were

embraced in Christ as 'the Beginning,' and how all was from the victory of His cross and the power of His resurrection. . . . My heart rejoiced in delivering this blessed message."

Ferozepore, November 8, 1884.—"This morning I am speaking of the two appearings, or Epiphanies, from Titus ii. 11, 12, the Epiphany of Grace which *began* the work of God in us and in all His people, and the Epiphany of Glory which *completes* it! What a beautiful, gladdening teaching is this!"

Lahore, St. Stephen's Day, December 26, 1886.—"This morning I took, after long preparation, a new text, Isa. xxviii. 5, 6, trying to show how, in spite of all the lowliness of the manger of Bethlehem, Christ Incarnate had been seen to His saints in all ages as 'the crown of glory and diadem of beauty'—to St. Stephen, to St. Paul before Nero, to Bishop Hannington and his little band of fellow-martyrs in Uganda—to many in high and low places, as St. Louis IX., Elizabeth of Hungary, Alfred the Great."

After reading passages like these, we can

better understand how distasteful to him must have been controversies on the externals of ritual and the like. His soul lived in a far higher atmosphere.

CHAPTER VIII

JOURNEYS AND VISITS, EAST AND WEST

IN reviewing Bishop French's work in the Diocese of Lahore, we did not wander beyond the bounds of his jurisdiction. But he was not actually in the diocese during the whole ten years of his episcopate. From March 1883 to September 1884 he was absent. He had received from the C.M.S. an earnest request that he would visit Persia, and execute the office of a Bishop in its Mission there; and, as he was taking furlough after six years' hard work in the diocese, he determined to return to England that way. The Bishop of London, who claimed whatever jurisdiction was possible over a branch of the Church in a foreign country like Persia, sent him a formal commission for the purpose.

The C.M.S. Mission in Persia had been established by Dr. Robert Bruce, who was engaged in revising Henry Martyn's Persian New Testament, and had baptized a few Mohammedan Persians; and, although he avoided proselytising from the Armenian Church, as a Roman Mission was doing, two or three hundred Armenians who were tired of their ignorant and often immoral priests, and had no wish to join the Roman Church, had put themselves under his purer teaching and induced him to open a school for their children. Bishop French had much sympathy and respect for the ancient Churches of the East, as we shall see by and by; but he felt bound to recognise the facts of the case in Persia. At Julfa, therefore, the Armenian suburb of Ispahan, where Bruce was carrying on his work, he confirmed sixty-seven candidates, and ordained a native pastor for the congregation, the Rev. Minasakan George. He thus wrote of the ordination:

"It was a scene and a service I can

never forget. I preached in Persian for nearly an hour, and fair facility and fluency were given me, thank God. I took for text, 'In all things approving ourselves as the ministers of Christ . . . by the Holy Ghost, by love unfeigned, by the word of truth, by the power of God. . . .' Minas, the old catechist (he must be fifty years old), with grey hairs here and there upon him, behaved with simple, quiet dignity. He read the Gospel, and gave the cup to the last row of communicants. The singing was delightful in the Armenian tongue. Among the hymns were 'The Church's one foundation' and 'Just as I am.' One's heart does yearn over these dear people."

It was with deep feeling that French found himself in Persia at all; and his journals, which are most interesting, are full of allusions to Henry Martyn. He landed at Bushire on Easter Day, which happened to fall that year (1883) on March 25, thus coinciding with Lady Day. His biographer notes the fact that Henry Martyn, in 1811, left India on March 25,

and had his first glimpse of the Persian coast on Easter Day. At Shiraz, the city where Martyn suffered so acutely from the reproaches and blasphemies of the mullahs, French experienced a very friendly reception, and found great readiness to hear the Gospel:

"Thank God for some most interesting conversations on the great truths of the kingdom of God, the death and burial of Christ, the atonement, or *kafara*, the second coming, etc. It is surprising to see how much is admitted, and apparently in some assurance of faith. The Lord does seem to have His own everywhere. They did not attempt to set up Mohammed against Christ. . . . The Word and Son of God, His eternal oneness with the Father, seemed to present no difficulty. . . .

"A general in the army and a sheikh called and sat a long time. They both wanted copies of the Bible, specially of Isaiah and Daniel, after what I told them of Cyrus and Darius from those books."

French also sought friendly intercourse

with the Armenian Bishops and priests. His whole heart went out in brotherly sympathy with these ancient Churches, so long oppressed by their Moslem rulers, and which, though scarcely ever attempting to preach the Gospel to the Mohammedans, did by their very existence bear a silent testimony to Christ. But, with all his large-heartedness, and his keen sense of every link with the early Church, he found little to encourage him in his friendly attitude. Oriental Christendom has never taken kindly to Western influence.

It should here be added that the C.M.S. Persia Mission, then carried on by Bruce only, with Dr. Hoernle as medical missionary, has since been largely developed, four chief cities having been occupied, and a considerable number of Persian Moslems baptized. It was joined in 1894 by Bishop E. C. Stuart, French's comrade in India forty years earlier, who gave up his New Zealand diocese—as French had given up his Indian diocese—to take up direct missionary work again. Persia has lately (1912) been made a missionary diocese,

with Dr. Stileman, an experienced missionary, as the first Bishop.

After three months in Persia, Bishop French left the country by the Caspian route, and, travelling via Moscow, St. Petersburg, and Berlin, reached England early in July. While at home he fulfilled not a few important and interesting functions. Before he became Bishop he had read a paper on Missions at the Stoke Church Congress in 1875, a masterpiece of beautiful thought and writing; and now he read one at the Reading Congress of 1883, which led to some subsequent discussion, owing to the freshness and boldness of the views expressed in it. Instead of boasting of the success achieved in the mission field, he urged that the work of the century called for "the deepest contrition, humiliation, and genuine heartfelt confession on the part of the labourers for past neglects and defects," and he pleaded for more "apostles." At once an outcry arose that a Bishop was disparaging missionaries. It was forgotten that French himself was a missionary. In

fact, he was humbling himself as their representative; and when he called for "apostles" he named, as examples of what he wanted, C.M.S. and C.E.Z.M.S. missionaries, Bishop G. E. Moule, George Maxwell Gordon, Robert Bruce, Miss Tucker, etc.

He gave the address at the famous annual missionary breakfast at Oxford arranged by Canon Christopher, and found two hundred young men "an inspiring sight." The breakfast had not at that time begun to attract the crowds of dons as well as of undergraduates that are now to be seen. He preached the C.M.S. annual sermon at St. Bride's, and wrote next day to his wife:

"It was a splendid congregation, almost appalling from the mass which filled basement, galleries, and all. . . . The responses of the congregation were like the murmurs of the sea. . . . Alas! I preached an hour and ten minutes. . . . I had to leave out bits here and there. . . . The Archbishop of Canterbury was present and gave the final prayer and blessing."

The sermon was a really great one, on Missions as in a sense *priestly* work, based on the striking words of St. Paul in Rom. xv. 16, where he calls himself the "minister" (*λειτουργόν*) of Christ, "ministering" (*ἱερουργοῦντα*) the Gospel, that the "offering up" (*προσφορά*) of the Gentiles might be acceptable.*

October of that year saw French back at Lahore, and, as we have seen, he had three years more of episcopal service. He left India finally on January 5, 1888; but not to return direct to England. After so short a time of absence, how could the soldier of the Cross go back at once to wife and family? There were two sections of Asiatics over whom his heart yearned, viz. the Oriental Christians and the Mohammedans: why should he not make a missionary journey to visit those in Syria and Mesopotamia, as he had already visited those in Persia? He sailed accordingly from Karachi up the Persian Gulf to Bussorah; and during more than a year he was travelling between Babylon, Bagdad,

* See further on this text page 121.

Mosul, Aleppo, Beyrout, Jerusalem, etc. Of this tour the next chapter will tell. At last he turned his face homewards, and reached England in April 1889.

Even then he could not be idle. He often travelled to various parts of the country in the interest of both S.P.G. and C.M.S., and took the opportunity to pay visits to Bishops and other friends, enjoying much the company of Bishop G. H. Wilkinson at Truro, Bishop Lightfoot at Durham, and Bishop Christopher Wordsworth at Lincoln. From time to time he had his share in church functions: for instance, he joined in the laying on of hands when Bishop Tucker of Uganda and Bishop Hodges of Travancore were consecrated at Lambeth. Still, he did at this time allow himself to enjoy a little of the sweets of family life. For he was ever a devoted husband and father, although he regarded himself as definitely called of God to this and that service abroad which involved long separation from those he loved so dearly. Mr. Birks gives a brief but picturesque account of a visit to his mother's

house at Chigwell in Essex, which was paid by the Bishop during a vacancy in the see of St. Albans, to hold a confirmation:

"When he arrived on the Saturday, before he could be hindered, he had plunged half way upstairs with a heavy bag of books, saying he 'would not break the housemaid's back with it.' On the Sunday morning he preached for the British Syrian Schools from his favourite passage in Zech. xiii., 'Awake, O sword,' and in the afternoon he held the confirmation. Before delivering his charge he knelt beside the chancel steps and poured forth his heart in every collect of the Prayer-book that pleads for the presence and good gifts of the Holy Ghost; then he spoke fervently about the seal of the Spirit impressing on the heart the image of the Saviour's love.

"The Bishop's blue bag, that he was so loth to let another carry, his brisk and energetic but somewhat jerky walk, due to sore feet that often pained him greatly, although he would not drive; his interest in all the work of others, his modesty about his own; his resolute redemption

of the time for private study; his unwillingness to lead the family worship, and the comprehensiveness and beauty of his prayers when at last he consented—will long live in the memory."

Another reminiscence illustrates both the physical vigour which he even yet possessed and the readiness with which he faced external inconveniences. Being in Northumberland, he planned a visit to Lindisfarne, "minding," like St. Paul at Troas, "himself to go afoot," as a pilgrim, to the scenes of the labours of St. Aidan and St. Cuthbert. Rain coming on, his son-in-law, the Rev. E. A. Knox (now Bishop of Manchester), ordered a carriage for the party; but, when they were starting, French was missing, and they found that he had already set off. Three or four miles on the road they overtook him "in his shirt-sleeves, dripping wet, his coat over his arm, trudging gallantly onwards." He went through a day of sight-seeing in his wet clothes, ending with a long train journey to Whitby. "His pleasure," says

Mr. Birks, "in the scenes of St. Cuthbert's and St. Aidan's ministries was so great that it seemed to act as a preservative against the rash exposure."

CHAPTER IX

AMONG THE EASTERN CHURCHES

AS we have already seen, Bishop French, on resigning his bishopric, did not return direct to England, but was for more than a year journeying about Mesopotamia and Syria. He encountered all the difficulties of travel familiar to visitors to those lands who go far off the tourist routes; and they cannot have been rendered less troublesome than usual by his carrying with him "a small representative library of all sorts of books almost, except high mathematics and novels!" But he was quite ready to brave heat and cold, dust and damp, caravanserais "not so clean as in Persia" (he said), poor food, and so on, if he could get into touch with Mohammedans, Jews, and Oriental Christians in their actual daily life, and talk with them

about the Lord Who died for them. "Several passages out of the Gospels," he wrote, "on our Lord's life and work, I was able to comment upon as we rode along, and where we stopped for an hour to get a cup of tea." With his ripe learning, his facility with languages, his historic instincts, his wide sympathies, his readiness to be servant of all men, his ardent love for his one Lord and Master, he found abundant opportunities of useful intercourse with Nestorian and Armenian and Jacobite and Greek ecclesiastics, with American Presbyterian missionaries, and with Moslems of both Turkish and Arabic race; and he frequently ministered in the churches of the various Christian communions. At some places, as in India, he gave lectures on the Uganda Mission. One extract from his letters must be given as a specimen of his visits to Arabs:

"Darkness overtook us . . . but, seeing the lights of a wild Arab hamlet by the roadside, whose name I did not learn, if it has a name at all, we threw ourselves

on the hospitality of the villagers, and got a little single-roomed house placed at our disposal, all but the zenana part screened by a sort of screen of straw-plaiting, where the good lady and her children secreted themselves. But these Arab ladies are most obliging sometimes, bring their children to be looked at, ask about my sons and daughters, and elicit my small stock of Arabic colloquial—I never forget the bakshish of course. Their behaviour is respectful, and even dignified, yet with a freedom of converse which surprises me. . . They soon had a fire lit, coffee roasted, ground, then boiled, and poured into cups like dolls' cups, and handed round with some fresh baked bread and the 'sour kraut' of curdled milk. For a couple of hours the Arab host and his friends sat and listened to stories from a passing traveller, the lady standing, like Sarah, at the tent-door and taking all in with curious interest. I said to the orator 'Now you have regaled us with feats of war, suppose you tell us a story out of the history of Abraham.' He confessed to profound ignorance on the subject; so I summoned what Arabic I could, and told of the

offering of Isaac and God's promises to him, with some teachings on the great account to be rendered before the judgment-seat of Christ."

The ancient Christian Churches everywhere called forth his especial interest and sympathy. He attended their services, knelt to receive the Holy Communion at their altars, and took infinite pains to explain to their Bishops and priests the true position of the Church of England. When asked by them what sort of Christian he called himself, his reply was, "Katulik la Papaviya" (Catholic, not Papal), a formula which he constantly repeated because the Roman missionaries, who were numerous everywhere, persistently branded all, Eastern or Western, who did not submit to the Pope as "uncatholic." They had been successful in attaching to the Latin Communion sections of the Syrian and Chaldean Churches, "aided by French prestige and influence"; but there were still considerable sections that clung to their ancient independence. French attended the services of all the different bodies. He was

often received courteously even by the Romans themselves: for instance, he was invited by Carmelite nuns at Bagdad to examine their school-girls. Always on the look-out for Christian heroes, he went to see the tomb, at a place called Mariaco, of Père Besson, a famous Dominican missionary, who, he wrote, was "a kind of Henry Martyn of the Roman Church," who had been Pio Nono's chief painter at the Vatican, but "gave up all for Christ" to go out as a missionary to the East. "I think," he said, "the Latins are far less bigoted than in Europe, though Mariolatry is much the same"; and he lamented the introduction of images into the churches, as likely to repel the Mohammedans.

An example of French's readiness for fellowship with all Christians may be taken from a Sunday spent at Mosul. First, he "attended Jacobite mass." "The prayers seemed full of Christ; the Virgin's name I caught once or twice, but not the connexion in which it came. I begged to receive the elements kneeling, and both were brought

to me by the officiating priest." At noon he was present at a Bible-class of the American Presbyterians, and "said a few words." In the afternoon he "attended a service of prayer and song in the fine Latin cathedral of the Dominicans." In the evening he "attended the American service." From Bagdad he wrote:

"An old Chaldean Christian member sits several hours a day with me, and I translate Spurgeon's sermons with him, and read the Arabic Bible with an Arabic work of controversy written in Spain by a Christian doctor about A.D. 870, and edited by Sir W. Muir. The Christians come to my room and have a little talk in Arabic; and I managed to read a lesson in church this morning and to give the benediction."

It is curious to find that a "little purple apron" which had been sent out to him was "a great help, as it is the recognised Eastern Bishop's dress." Of one Jacobite church, at Diarbekir, he wrote quite enthusiastically:

"My heart was full of joy at the store of Scripture read out so eloquently and with such expressiveness—the later history of Samson, Hosea xiv., the Philippi history of St. Paul. Most full of joy at the sermon, which was a rich treat of evangelical marrow and fatness. A Puritan would have heard it with glistening eyes. Christ, and Christ only, was the Good Samaritan; then, earnest exhortations to come to Him. A fine congregation, one-third women, all on the ground."

Bishop French avowed that he began his tour somewhat prejudiced against the American missionaries, as representing a policy of proselytism from the ancient Churches; but in one of his long letters to Archbishop Benson he said that he "found witness borne on all hands to the remarkable stirring and awakening which their schools and public services and ministries, with the large circulation of the Holy Scriptures, had brought about among several of the Churches of the East." "Both at Mosul and at Mardin," he wrote in another letter, "I have felt compelled to

break my rule of not speaking in other than Church of England places of worship, and have addressed their large flocks, having the missionary for my interpreter. In these wildernesses of the world, at least, I can scarcely think I should be blamed." He was glad to hear of the Archbishop's Mission to the Assyrian Christians, which was just then beginning its work. He wrote long letters to Benson on the whole position, which were afterwards printed in the Report on Missions issued by the United Boards of Missions in 1894.

Mesopotamia, of course, presented much besides the Eastern Churches to interest a scholar like French. He was keen to examine the ruins of Babylon and Nineveh, and he was fortunate in meeting "a Mr. Budge, of the British Museum," whom he refers to as "a young and vigorous traveller" who "reads off cuneiform inscriptions like English"; apparently in ignorance of the European reputation to which Dr. Wallis Budge was then already attaining. But he viewed the ancient remains in a spirit very unlike that of the

casual tourist. For instance, he wrote from Babylon :

"A good part of to-day has been spent in examining the mounds of Nebuchadnezzar's palace, standing on its height, and trying to picture the time when he stood on its parapets and exclaimed, 'Is not this great Babylon which I have built?' and then, when the discipline was complete, made his lowly confession of faith : 'Now I, Nebuchadnezzar, praise, extol, and honour the king of heaven.' The willows along the Euphrates banks touchingly reminded one of the harps of the captive Jews hung on the willows. To imagine Belshazzar's boisterous and guilty carousals in the midst of such unbroken silence was difficult, or to think of Alexander dying there in the full tide of his conquests over the world, except himself, his own lusts and passions."

After several months so spent, French came into Palestine towards the end of the year. He was delighted to spend the Christmas of 1888 at Bethlehem, with Miss Jacombs, of the Female Education Society

(afterwards of the C.M.S.). He conducted the service, and preached on "When the fulness of the time was come," etc., in Gal. iv., especially on the words, "Because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts." Of the Rev. Chalil Jamal, the C.M.S. native clergyman at Salt, he wrote one of his highly characteristic descriptions:

"Mr. Jamal is something like Bishop Dupanloup, I should say, in his excellence in catechising; a real lamp burning and shining in the midst of the wild Bedawin of the lower ranges of the Moab hills. He is a little Elisha up there, minus the she-bears, though his rough hairy dress almost calls Elijah's to mind."

On April 17, the Wednesday in Holy Week, he once more arrived in England, for the last time.

CHAPTER X

HIS FIFTH PIONEER WORK: ARABIA

BISHOP FRENCH could not settle down in England. He hungered for fresh work of a more definite kind; and to the East he must go. But whither? At that time there were strained relations between Bishop Blyth of Jerusalem and the C.M.S.; and French much wished to be instrumental in bringing about more cordial co-operation between them in the work which both were doing in Palestine. First he thought of becoming a kind of roving commissioner for the Society with which he had kept so long and happy a connexion as a missionary. Then, on the other hand, he thought of putting his experience, as a Bishop who had been obliged to deal with various Church parties, at Bishop Blyth's disposal in some unofficial way. But neither scheme

proved to be practicable; and then French's ardent spirit took a wider flight, and after study, inquiry, and prayer, he dedicated himself to missionary service as a free-lance pioneer in the hitherto most inaccessible of Mohammedan lands —Arabia.

He had been deeply interested in a remarkable article by Alexander Mackay of Uganda, which appeared in the *C.M. Intelligencer* of January 1889, entitled "Muscat, Zanzibar, and Central Africa." Zanzibar, prior to the German occupation which preceded the British Protectorate, had been a dependency of the Sultan of Oman, in Eastern Arabia, whose capital was Muscat. From Muscat came many of the Mohammedan traders who so vehemently opposed Mackay's work and influence in Uganda; and they used to say to him, "Ah, you come and convert the Uganda people, who are idol-worshippers; you never tried to convert us at Muscat!" Mackay, with his usual far-seeing statesmanship, urged in his article that Moslem influence should be attacked at its headquarters by the

establishment of a C.M.S. Mission at Muscat; and Bishop French, for the fifth time undertaking the rôle of a pioneer, resolved to go there himself, and perhaps prepare the way for the Society. It was an heroic venture for a man of sixty-five, already strained with much travelling and increasing studies and labours; but French, as we now know, was of the stuff of which heroes are made.

He left England on November 8, 1890—never to return; went first to Tunis and Egypt; thence to Bombay and Karachi—the only way of reaching Muscat; and arrived at Muscat itself on February 8, 1891. "I being in the way," he wrote, "the Lord led me," like Abraham's servant. At Tunis, and at the sacred Moslem city of Kairowan, and at Alexandria and Cairo, he seized every opportunity of improving, and using in Christ's cause, his colloquial Arabic. He could not see, he wrote, interpreting the "tongues" of the Corinthian Church as standing for varied languages, that he had any right to let his life's work at tongues go to waste, "in spite of St.

Paul's deprecation of them in comparison with charity." With the same object, instead of taking a P. & O. mail-boat to Bombay, he sailed from Suez in a Turkish coasting steamer that was going to the various ports on both sides of the Red Sea, Jedda, Suakin, Massowa, Hodaida, and so to Aden, where he visited the grave of Ion Keith-Falconer, the devoted pioneer of the Free Church of Scotland, who had left his Cambridge Arabic Professorship to start that Church's Arabian Mission, and had died after a few months' work. From Aden he had to take the mail-steamer to Bombay, and thence to come back to Karachi. It was from that port that he had finally left his Indian diocese three years before; and he would not land, but stayed on board the small Persian Gulf steamer—not in very pleasant environment: "Arabs, Persians, and Hindus are my brother-passengers, who cook their food as well as eat it in the saloon, and its scents at least are not savoury if its composites are; the chief advantage being that I hear Arabic spoken incessantly

and loudly, and so a succession of munshis keep me primed for my next preachings." He would take the second-class saloon even in so inferior a boat, but, "finding the Arab horse-dealers too overpowering," he was forced, against his will, to transfer himself to the first class, such as it was. Happily he had a companion with him in the person of the Rev. A. C. Maitland, of the S.P.G. Delhi Mission, who had been one of his clergy in the Lahore diocese, and had joined him in Egypt. Mr. Maitland was himself almost an invalid, and this was an advantage in one sense, as for his sake French refrained from reckless doings in which he might otherwise have indulged.

They landed at Muscat on February 8. The Bishop would not accept hospitality from the British Political Agent, Colonel Mockler, as he wished neither to compromise the Government of India by his missionary proceedings nor to give ground for any prejudice against him on the part of the Arabs as representing a foreign power. They therefore had some difficulty

in finding a roof to shelter them. Mr. Maitland wrote :

" At last a Hindu merchant got a Goanese half-caste to take us in ; so we went back and got our baggage from the steamer, and settled ourselves as well as we could in a longish room, very dirty, with one charpoy in it, a broken couch, and a number of chairs. . . . We got a kettle boiled and some coffee and biscuits. Later we got some chapatis and milk from the bazaar."

But the house turned out to be a Portuguese grog-shop for the Arabs ! whereupon French accepted the offer, from the American consul, of a house at Muttra, a large town three miles off by boat :

" Mr. Mackinly sent a servant to put us into the house, who got it swept out a bit, arranged with a bihisti to bring us water daily, and a woman to supply us with milk, went with me to the bazaar to buy some sugar, candles, etc., and then had to return to Muscat, and we were left monarch (and attendant) of all we surveyed. Luckily there were some *degehies*

(cooking-pots) and plenty of cups and plates in the house. I had bought two teaspoons and a rusty knife in Muscat, and got three more tin spoons in Muttra. Excellent Persian bread was to be bought close by, so I boiled the kettle and made some tea, and we dined. We were to have had evensong together afterwards, but the place was so dirty (not having been occupied for seven or eight months), and I took so long washing up, and getting a clean place to put the things, that—well, evensong was not said together."

These are trivialities, but they are realities, and help our conceptions of the Bishop's life. Mr. Maitland, however, had to leave after a week or two to return to Delhi; and French himself wrote little of this kind, but kept a full journal of his intercourse with the people and efforts to preach Christ to them, which is deeply interesting, but of which only a few brief passages can be quoted :

"Difficulties and hindrances abound. Muscat is full of mosques, and they are fairly

well attended by women as well as men, more so than in any other Mohammedan city I have seen."

"I cannot say that I have met with many thoughtful and encouraging hearers or people who want Bibles and Testaments; there is much holding aloof, and even occasionally of bitter and angry opposition. The Arabs seem, on the whole, the most quiet and thoughtful hearers. I must at least thank God that even the first fortnight I have been able to secure so much of patient attention and real opening up of the great truths of the Gospel."

"Colonel Mockler still does all he can to dissuade my selecting Muscat for a centre."

"Two days ago a large party of Arabs (ladies and gentlemen, the former standing, the latter sitting) made almost a dead set at me to induce me to turn Mohammedan. It was a new experience to me, but useful as enabling me better to understand the feeling an Arab or Hindu would have in being so approached with a view to changing a faith dear to him as life itself, and so with the Moslems it usually is."

"Happily we have the promise for Arabia twice repeated by name in the 72nd Psalm

(P. B. Version). Was it that which took St. Paul so soon into Arabia?"

"Beyond all my expectations I am permitted to witness here to companies of educated and thoughtful Arab sheikhs and their followers. Last evening I sat an hour in a circle of them, going through many of the most vital Gospel truths, and listened to with marked attention and seriousness. . . . I began by speaking of the coming kingdom of God and Christ, reading David's words in 2 Sam. xxiii. Then, from Isa. xxxv. and Ps. lxxii., I showed some of the characteristic features of this kingdom, and how the kings of Arabia and Seba should bring gifts. Then the way was open for further reference to the kingdom of Christ as set up in the heart, being in effect a new creation through repentance and death to sin with Christ, and resurrection with Him to a higher and holier life. Many questions they asked as to prayers and pilgrimages; what I thought of Mohammed and the Koran; what would become of the drunkard and the fornicator in the coming kingdom: in answer to which I read much of Rev. xxi. and xxii., which seemed to strike them much."

"A long afternoon in the town. Some

solemn and serious preachings in companies of educated people. They cost a great effort, and I had to throw myself on God's help to carry me through. I was thus able to speak with some authority which God gave me, and with pointed appeals. It is chiefly in coffee-shops that these gatherings take place."

"A still more hopeful day than yesterday. . . . Sitting by an old wall, I had a long conversation with some ten or twelve adults and a few intelligent boys. Went carefully through St. John iii. and Rom. vi. . . . As the sea was too rough for a small boat to return at 2 p.m., I sat by the roadside in a quiet street reading my New Testament; but a neighbouring Arab gentleman came out, and, with polite courtesy, beckoned me to come into his house. He had coffee and refreshments brought, and I read him and his friends some Scripture portions."

"Oppressed with weariness and hot wind to-day, but forced myself out, and was more than rewarded by two quite lengthened opportunities of opening up some of the grandest truths of the Gospel. A venerable and dignified old teacher, or sheik, came out and took part with much gravity and

quiet intelligence, and rebuked a very virulent African whose resistance to the Gospel was most bitter, though intensely ignorant."

On Easter Day, March 29, he held a service at Muscat itself for a congregation of four persons, including Colonel and Mrs. Mockler, who received the Holy Communion with him:

"The thoughts of the day and its glorious truths had so possessed me that I was able to enjoy the subject, 'Reckon yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God.' We had two hymns, 'Jesus Christ is risen to-day,' and 'Oh, what the joy!'"

Meanwhile he was making inquiries as to the feasibility of a journey into the interior, and at last found an Arab who seemed an earnest inquirer, and who was willing to go with him. On April 24 he wrote to the author of this present volume, summarising his work and prospects, and adding, with reference to that Arab, "I

have sung my *Te Deum* for him." At last, on May 5, he started in an open boat for Sib, a village some thirty miles distant, whence he would try and go inland.

On that same day, May 5, 1891, the annual meeting of the C.M.S. was being held in Exeter Hall. The letter just referred to did not reach England till a fortnight later, but it showed that he had not forgotten what was going on in London:

"I am asking a special blessing for your May meetings and services. . . . The Archbishop will be at his best, I trust, and directed what to say for the glory of Christ and the good of His Church and the Society's highest interests."

Archbishop Benson was, in fact, the chief speaker that day, and referred sympathetically to Bishop French. So did the President in the chair, Sir John Kennaway:

"We desire to send forth a message of tender, strong sympathy, encouragement, and support to those of our brethren in distant lands who are holding the fort or

carrying the war into the enemy's country . . . and to cheer the heart of that old veteran, Thomas Valpy French, who, in the fortieth year of his missionary service, unsupported so far as human help goes, is attacking the seemingly impregnable fortress of Islam in the eastern parts of Arabia."

CHAPTER XI

THE HOME CALL—AND AFTER

BUT it was not to be. Bishop French was already weakened by fever, and at Sib he broke down altogether. With deep reluctance he allowed himself to be taken back to Muscat, where he was attended by Dr. Jayaker, an Indian surgeon in the service of the British Government. Against his wish, he was moved, almost unconscious, to the Residency, where he was kindly received by Colonel Mockler. He was beyond writing; indeed, his last letter home had been posted on May 3, two days before he left for Sib. He quickly sank, and died at noon on the 14th.

The last offices were performed by Christians, Goanese Roman Catholics who had heard of him; and their whole small community attended the funeral the same

evening. The coffin was covered with the British flag, and the service was read by Colonel Mockler.

Mr. Maitland went to Muscat in the following September, and obtained the details of the Bishop's last days on earth. "The first telegram," he wrote, "gave sunstroke as the cause of death; . . . but it has gradually come home to me that it was not sunstroke, and a conversation I had with Dr. Jayaker . . . confirms the idea that death was due, not to any special stroke, but to the effects of the great heat upon the Bishop's enfeebled constitution, which produced exhaustion, and then failure of the brain, and finally of the heart. . . . The whole task he attempted was beyond his physical powers. He attempted a mode of life which would have taxed a young man's strength in a climate that crushed him."

The little Christian cemetery at Muscat is most picturesquely situated at the foot of almost perpendicular cliffs rising from a little cove, and is reached by boat, by rounding a rocky point to the south of the

city; "a wild, barren spot, but not altogether arid." An Indian chaplain who visited the place two or three years later found "three trees, out of the very few Muscat can boast of, in full leaf," also "a shrub, a kind of broom, with smooth green leaves and pink flowers." A wooden cross had been put up temporarily by Colonel Mockler, but a permanent tomb of white Jaipur marble was afterwards erected, with a recumbent cross. The inscription simply gives the name, office, and date, and two texts in English and Arabic, viz.: "Except a corn of wheat," etc., and "Even as the Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many." In the Cathedral at Lahore a brass was put up with a fuller inscription, including French's favourite text, on which he had preached the C.M.S. annual sermon, and also before the University of Cambridge:

"A minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, ministering the Gospel of God, that the offering up of the Gentiles might

THE CEMETERY AT MUSCAT, WITH BISHOP FRENCH'S GRAVE.

be acceptable, being sanctified by the Holy Ghost" (Rom. xv. 16).

No text could be more suitable for a memorial of Bishop French. "A minister" (λειτουργός) . . . "ministering" (ἱερουργοῦντα) —offering sacrifice as a priest. What was the sacrifice offered? Not "the Gospel of God," as at first sight we might read it, but the Gentile world (προσφορὰ τῶν ἐθνῶν). That is exactly what French desired to share in. St. Paul, in taking his share, describes himself as "making it my aim (*marg.* being ambitious, φιλοτιμούμενον) so to preach the Gospel, not where Christ was already named, that I might not build upon another man's foundation" (Rom. xv. 20); and this, partly in letter and altogether in spirit, was one characteristic feature of French's career. And the priestly character of missionary work, which St. Paul, in this one place, claims as attaching to his own, is precisely what French also gloried in.

Scarcely less suitable are the texts at his grave itself. "Even as the Son of Man":

to be like Christ was his dearest desire. "Not to be ministered unto, but to minister": no words could more truly describe his life; "minister" here (διακονέω) being, not officiating as a priest, but "serving" God and man as a servant. And surely, like his Divine Master, he was a "corn of wheat" fallen into the earth and dying, that it might bring forth much fruit.

That "fruit," however, was not to be gathered, as French hoped, by the C.M.S. or by any Church of England agency. In the Turkish coasting steamer which had taken him down the Red Sea was another missionary passenger, Samuel W. Zwemer, of the American (Dutch) Reformed Church, who also was projecting a Mission in Eastern Arabia. The Bishop took possession of the land by laying his weary body under the cliffs of Muscat. Zwemer took possession, in the happy providence of God, by living and working on that wild coast for many years, establishing a permanent and important Mission. He has lost his brother, and other fellow-workers, in the service of that Mission; and, on the

other hand, by marrying an Australian lady attached to the C.M.S. Mission at Bagdad, he provided for the much-needed work among the Arabian women. He is now known all over the world as one of the very first authorities on Missions to Mohammedans. His book on Arabia, published in 1900, has become the classical work on the subject. His quarterly review, *The Moslem World*, is read with keen interest in Europe and America.

While Bishop French was ending his earthly career at Muscat, his old companion and brother Bishop, Edward Craig Stuart, who had gone to India with him in 1850 and shared in his earliest labours at Agra, was ably and wisely administering the diocese of Waiapu in New Zealand. But the sequel is one of deep interest. Less than a year after French's home-call, two C.M.S. men go out to Australia and New Zealand to stir up the Churches there to take their part in the evangelisation of the heathen world. To one of them—the present biographer—Bishop Stuart opens

his heart. Should he not follow his old comrade's example, give up his bishopric, and devote his remaining days to preaching Christ to the Mohammedans? A learned New Zealand missionary in Persia, Mr. St. Clair Tisdall, sees in the *C. M. Intelligencer* an account of the awakening of some Christian hearts in his colonial home to the claims of the heathen. He writes to Bishop Stuart: Come to Persia! That letter is God's message; and the Diocese of Waiapu is called upon to bid farewell to its Chief Pastor. Stuart comes to England, tells the C.M.S. circle at the May meeting of 1894 of the Lord's call to him, takes leave of the Society on the 44th anniversary of the first sailing of himself and French to India (September 11), and starts the next day for Persia. And in Persia he is permitted by the grace of God to labour, with short intervals, for over fifteen years; until at last, in his eighty-fourth year, he is brought to England to die, and enters into rest on March 15, 1911. Thus, together French and Stuart went in the name of the Lord to India;

together they planned St. John's College; twenty-seven years later—within a few weeks of each other—they were consecrated Bishops in the Church of God; each in his turn gave up his bishopric to become again a simple missionary; each set himself to make known the Gospel to the Mohammedans of Western Asia; and only at the end was the parallel broken by one outliving the other twenty years. Is there any case quite like this in all Church history? And have we any nobler examples of self-sacrificing devotion than are furnished by the careers of Thomas Valpy French and Edward Craig Stuart?

Let us close our story with two utterances of rare beauty. First, Bishop French's own request for prayer sent from Muscat to the band called "Watchers and Workers"—a prayer, be it noted, not for himself, but for the Arab race for whose evangelisation he laid down his life:

"I long for the prayers of your little band of intercessors offering this simple request, that, as the Arab has been so

grievously a successful instrument in deposing Christ from His throne (for this long season only), in so many fair regions of the East . . . so the Arab may, in God's good providence, be at least one of the main auxiliaries and reinforcements in restoring the Great King, and reseating Him on David's throne of judgment and mercy, and Solomon's throne of peace, and, above all, God's throne of righteousness."

And, secondly, the fine poem in which Archdeacon A. E. Moule commemorated the heroic Bishop:

In Memory of

THOMAS VALPY FRENCH

BISHOP MISSIONARY *

WHERE Muscat fronts the Orient sun
'Twixt heaving sea and rocky steep,
His work of mercy scarce begun,
A saintly soul has fallen asleep:
Who comes to lift the Cross instead?
Who takes the standard from the dead?

* *Church Missionary Intelligencer*, July 1891, p. 510.

Where, under India's glowing sky,
  Agra the proud, and strong Lahore,
Lift roof and gleaming dome on high,
  His "seven-toned" tongue is heard no more:
Who comes to sound alarm instead?
Who takes the clarion from the dead?

Where white camps mark the Afghan's bound,
  From Indus to Suleiman's range,
Through many a gorge and upland—sound
  Tidings of joy divinely strange:
But there they miss *his* eager tread;
Who comes to toil then for the dead?

Where smile Cheltonian hills and dales,
  Where stretches Erith down to shore
Of Thames, wood-fringed and fleck'd with sails,
  His holy voice is heard no more.
Is it for nothing he is dead?
Send forth your children in his stead!

Far from fair Oxford's groves and towers,
  Her scholar Bishop dies apart;
He blames the ease of cultured hours
  In death's still voice that shakes the heart.
Brave saint! for dark Arabia dead!
I go to fight the fight instead!

O Eastern-lover from the West!
  Thou hast out-soared these prisoning bars;
Thy memory, on thy Master's breast,
  Uplifts us like the beckoning stars.
We follow now as thou hast led;
Baptize us, Saviour, for the dead!

A. E. M.

Printed by Hazell, Watson & Viney, Ld., London and Aylesbury.